

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JUNE 1892.

THE SLAVE OF THE LAMP.

BY HENRY SETON MERRIMAN,

AUTHOR OF 'YOUNG MISTLEY.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

BACK TO LIFE.

ONE mellow autumnal evening, when the sunlight reflected from the white monastery walls upon the fruit trees climbing there was still warm and full of ripening glow, the Provincial was taking his post-prandial promenade.

It is, perhaps, needless to observe that he was alone. No one ever walked with the Provincial. No footstep ever crushed the gravel in harmony with his gliding tread. Perhaps, indeed, no one had ever walked with him thus, in the twilight, since a fairy dancing form had moved in the shadow of his tall person, and footsteps lighter than his own had vainly endeavoured to keep time with his longer limbs. But that was in no monastery garden; and the useful, vegetable-producing inclosure bore little resemblance to the château terrace. In those days it may be that there was a gleam of life in the man's deep, velvety eyes—perhaps, indeed, a moustache adorned the short twisted lip where the white fingers rasped so frequently now.

The pious monks were busy with their evening meal, and the Provincial was quite alone in the garden. All around him the leaves glowed ruddily in the warm light. Everywhere the fruits of earth were ripe and full with mature beauty; but the solitary walker noted none of these. He paced backwards and forwards

with downcast eyes, turning slowly and indifferently as if it mattered little where he walked. The merry blackbirds in the hay-field adjoining the garden called to each other continuously, and from a hidden rookery came the voices of the dusky settlers, which is, perhaps, the saddest sound in all nature's harmonies. But the Jesuit resolutely refused to listen. Once, however, he stopped and stood motionless for some seconds, with his head turned slightly to meet the distant cry; but he never raised his eyes, which were deep and lifeless in their gaze. It may be that there was a rookery near that southern château, where he once had walked in the solemn evening hour, or perhaps he did not hear that sound at all though his ear was turned towards it.

It would be hard indeed to read from the priest's still features the thoughts that might be passing through his powerful brain; but the strange influence of his being was such as makes itself felt without any spoken word. As he walked there with his long hands clasped behind his back, his peculiarly shaped head bent slightly forward, and his perfect lips closely pressed, no one could have looked at him without feeling instinctively that no ordinary mind was busy beneath the tiny tonsure—that no ordinary soul breathed there for weal or woe, seeking after higher things in the right way or the wrong. The man's cultivated repose of manner, his evident intellectuality, and his subtle strength of purpose visible in every glance of his eyes, betrayed that although his life might be passed in the calm retreat of a monastery, his soul was not there. The man was never created to pass his existence in prayerful meditation; his mission was one of strife and contention amidst the strong minds of the age. One felt that he was living in this quiet Breton valley for a purpose; that from this peaceful spot he was dexterously handling wires that caused puppets—ay, puppets with golden crowns—to dance, and smirk, and bow in the farthest corners of the earth.

Presently the Jesuit heard footsteps upon the gravel at the far side of the garden, but he did not raise his head. His interest in the trivial incidents of every-day life appeared to be quite dead.

'Softly, softly!' said a deep rough voice, which the Provincial recognised as that of the sub-prior; then he raised his eyes slightly and looked across the garden, without, however, altering his pace.

He saw there Christian Vellacott walking by the side of the hard-faced old monk with long hesitating strides, like a man who had forgotten how to use his legs. It was exactly six weeks since

the young journalist had passed through that garden with René Drucquer, and those weeks had been to him a strange and not unpleasant dream. It seemed as if the man lying upon that little bed was in no way connected with the wiry energetic Christian Vellacott of old. As he lay there semi-somnolent and lazily comfortable from sheer weakness, his interest in life was of a speculative description, as if he looked on things from afar off. Nothing seemed to matter much. There was an all-pervading sense of restful indifference as to whether it might be night or day, morning, noon or evening. All responsibility in existence seemed to have left him; his ready pride of self-dependence had given way to a gentle obedience, and the passage from wakefulness to sleep was very sweet.

Through all those dreamy hours he heard the soft rustle of woollen garments and the suppressed shuffle of sandalled feet. Whenever he opened his heavy eyes he discerned vaguely in the dim light a grey still form seated upon the plain wooden bench at his bedside. Whenever he tried to change his position upon the hard bed and his weary bones refused their function, strong hard hands were slipped beneath him and kind assistance freely given. As a rule, it was the tall sub-prior who ministered to the sick man, fighting the dread fever with all his simple knowledge; his hands smoothed oftenest the tossed pillow; but many clean-shaven, strong, and weary faces were bowed over the bed during those six weeks, for there was a competition for the post of sick-nurse. The monks loved to feel that they were performing some tangible good, and not spending their hours over make-believe tasks like a man-of-warsman in fine weather.

One frequent visitor, however, Christian Vellacott never saw beneath his lazy lashes. The Provincial never entered that little cell unless he was positively informed that its inmate was asleep. The inscrutable Jesuit seemed almost to be ashamed of the anxiety that he undoubtedly felt respecting the sick man thus thrown upon his hands by a peculiar chain of incidents. He spoke coldly and sarcastically to the sub-prior whenever he condescended to mention the subject at all; but no day passed in which he failed to pay at least one visit to the little cell at the end of the long silent corridor.

‘Softly, softly!’ said the old sub-prior, holding out his bony hand to stay his companion’s progress, ‘you are too ambitious, my son.’

Christian laughed in a low weak voice, and raised his head to

look round him. The laugh ceased suddenly as he caught sight of the Provincial, and across the potato bed the two strong men looked speculatively into each other's eyes in the peaceful twilight. The Jesuit's gaze fell first, and with a dignified bow he moved gently away.

'I am stronger than I look, my father,' said Christian, turning to his companion. Then they walked slowly on, and presently rested upon a wooden bench built against the monastery wall.

The young Englishman leant back and watched the Provincial, who was pacing backwards and forwards where they had first seen him. The old monk sat with clasped hands, and gravely contemplated the gravel beneath his feet. Thus they waited together within the high whitewashed walls, while the light faded from the western sky. Three types, as strangely contrasted as the student of human kind could wish to see: the old monk with his placid bloodless face and strong useless arms—a wasted energy, a mere monument to mistaken zeal; and the younger men so widely severed by social circumstances, and yet resembling each other somewhat in heart and soul. Each had a strong individuality—each a great and far-reaching vitality. Each was, in his way, a power in the world, as all strong minds are; for in face of what may be said (and with apparent justice) respecting chance and mere good fortune, good men must come to the top among their fellows. They must—and most assuredly they do. As in olden days the doughtiest knights sought each other in the battle-field to measure steel, so in these later times the ruling intellects of the day meet and clear a circle round them. The Provincial was a power in the Society of Jesus; perhaps he was destined one day to be general of it; and Christian Vellacott had suddenly appeared upon the field of politic strife, heralding his arrival with two most deadly blows dealt in masterly succession. From the first they were sure to come together, sooner or later; and now, when they were separated by nothing more formidable than a bed of potatoes, they were glancing askance and longing to be at each other. But it could not be. Had the sub-prior left the garden it would have made no difference. It was morally impossible that those two men could speak what they were thinking, for one of them was a Jesuit.

The Provincial, however, made the first move, and the Englishman often wondered in later days what his intention might have been. He walked on to the northern end of the garden, where a

few thick-stemmed pear trees were trained against the wall. The fruit was hanging in profusion, for it was not consumed in the monastery, but given to the poor at harvest time. The Provincial selected a brown ripe pear, and broke it delicately from the tree without allowing his fingers to come in contact with the fruit itself. Then he turned and walked with the same lazy precision towards the two other occupants of the garden. At his approach the sub-prior rose from his seat and stood motionless with clasped hands; there was a faint suggestion of antagonism in his attitude, which was quite devoid of servility. Christian, however, remained seated, raising his keen grey eyes to the Provincial's face with a quiet self-assertion which the Jesuit ignored.

'I am glad, monsieur, to see you restored to health,' he said coldly to Christian, meeting his gaze for a moment.

The Englishman bowed very slightly, and there was a peculiar expressiveness in the action which betrayed his foreign education, but the cool silence with which he waited for the Provincial to speak again was essentially British. The Jesuit moved and glanced slowly beneath his lowered eyelids towards the motionless figure of the sub-prior. He was too highly bred to allow himself to be betrayed into any sign of embarrassment, and too clever to let the Englishman see that he was hesitating. After a momentary pause he turned gravely to the sub-prior, and said:

'Will you allow your patient, my brother, to taste of our fruit? It is ripe and wholesome.'

Then, without awaiting a reply, he presented the pear to Vellacott. It was a strange action, and no doubt there was some deep intention in it. The Jesuit must have known, however, from René Drucquer's report, and from his own observations, that Christian Vellacott was of too firm a mould to allow his feelings to be influenced by a petty action of this description, however sincere and conciliatory might have been the spirit in which it was conceived. Perhaps he read the Englishman's character totally wrong, although his experience of men must have been very great; or perhaps he really wished to conciliate him, and took this first step with the graceful delicacy of his nation, with a view to following it up.

With a conventional word of thanks, Vellacott took the pear and set it down upon the bench at his side. Whatever the Jesuit's intention might have been, it was frustrated by his quiet action. It would have been so easy to have said a few words of

praise regarding the fruit, and it was only natural to have begun eating it at once ; but Vellacott read a deeper meaning in all this, and he chose a more difficult course. It was assuredly harder to keep silence than to talk, and a weaker-minded man would have thanked the Provincial with effusion. The manner in which Vellacott laid the fruit upon the bench, his quiet and deliberate silence, conveyed unmistakably and intentionally that the Provincial's society was as unwelcome as it was unnecessary. There was nothing to be done but take the hint ; and in the lowering twilight the solitary, miserable man moved reluctantly away. With contemplative hardness of heart the Englishman watched him go ; there was no feeling of triumph in his soul—neither, however, was there pity. The Jesuit had chosen his own path, he had reached his goal, and that most terrible thirst—the thirst for power—was nearly slaked. If at times—at the end of a long day of hard mental work, when men's hearts are softened by weariness and lowering peace—he desired something else than power, some little touch of human sympathy perhaps, his was the blame if no heart responded to his own. Christian Vellacott sat and wondered dreamily, with the nonchalance of a man who has been at the very gates of death, if power were worth this purchase money.

The sub-prior had seated himself again, and with his strong hands meekly clasped he waited. He knew that something was passing which he could not understand ; his dull instincts told him vaguely that between these two strong men there was warfare, dumb, sullen, and merciless ; but unused as he was to the ways of men, unlearned in the intricacies of human thoughts, he could not read more.

‘ You have not told me yet, my father,’ said Vellacott, ‘ how long I have been ill.’

‘ Six weeks, my son,’ replied the taciturn monk.

‘ And it was very bad ?’

‘ Yes, very bad.’

Christian slowly rubbed his thin hands together. His fingers were moist and singularly white, with a bleached appearance about the knuckles. His face was thin, but not emaciated, his long jaw and somewhat pronounced chin were not more bony than of old, but the expression of his mouth was quite changed ; his lips were no longer thrust upward with a determined curve, and a smile seemed nearer at hand.

‘ I have a faint recollection of being very tenderly nursed

and cared for ; generally by you, I think. No doubt you saved my life.'

The sub-prior moved a little, and drew in his feet.

'The matter was not in my hands,' he said, quietly.

The Englishman, with some tact, allowed this remark to pass in acquiescent silence.

'Did you ever think that—I was not—going back to England?' he asked presently, in a lighter tone, though the thought of returning home brought no smile to his face.

The sub-prior did not reply at once. He appeared to be thinking deeply, for he leant forward in an unmonastic attitude with his knees apart, his elbows resting upon them, and his hands clasped. He gazed across the prosaic potato bed with his colourless lips slightly apart.

'One night,' he began meditatively, 'I went to sit with you after the bell for matins had been rung. From midnight till three o'clock you never moved. Then I gave you some cordial, and as I stooped over you the candle flickered a little ; there were strange shadows upon your face, but around your lips there was a deeper shade. I had seen it once before, on my brother's face when he lay upon the hard Paris pavement with a bullet in his lungs, and his breath whistling through the orifice as the winds whistle round our walls in winter. I held the candle closer to your face, and as I did so, a hand came over my shoulder and took it from my fingers. The Father Provincial had come to help me. He said no word, but set the candle down upon the bed, and I held you up while he administered the cordial drop by drop, as a man oils a cart-wheel.'

'Ah !' said Christian slowly and suggestively, '*he* was there !'

The monk made no reply. He sat motionless with a calm, acquired silence, which might have meant much or nothing.

'Did he come often ?' inquired the Englishman.

'Very often.'

'I never saw him.'

This, again, was met with silence. Presently the sub-prior continued his narrative.

'When daylight came at last,' he said, 'the shadow had left your lips. I think that night was the worst ; it was then that you were nearer . . . nearer than at any other time.'

Christian Vellacott was strong enough now to take his usual interest in outward things. With the writer's instinct he went

through the world looking round him, always studying men and things, watching, listening, and storing up experience. The Provincial interested him greatly, but he did not dare to show his curiosity, he hesitated to penetrate the darkness that surrounded the man's life, past, present, and future. In a minor degree the taciturn sub-prior arrested his attention. The old monk was in a communicative humour, and the Englishman led him on a little without thinking much about the fairness of it.

'Did your brother die?' he asked, sympathetically.

'He died,' was the reply. 'Yes, my son, he died—died cursing the tyrant's bullet in his lungs. He threw away his life in a vain attempt to alter human nature, to set straight that which is crooked and cannot be set straight. He sought to bring about at once that which cometh not until the lion shall eat straw like an ox. See, my son, that you do not attempt the same.'

'I think,' said Christian, after a pause, 'that we all try a little, and perhaps some day a great accumulation of little efforts will take place. You, my father, have tried as well!'

The monk slowly shook his head, without, however, any great display of conviction.

'I was not always a monk,' he said, as if seeking to excuse a bygone folly.

It was nearly dark now. The birds were silent, and only the whispering of the crisp withering leaves broke the solemn hush of eventide. The two men sat side by side without speaking. They had learnt to know each other fairly well during the last weeks—so well that between them silence was entirely restful. At length Christian moved restlessly. He had reached that stage of convalescence where a position becomes irksome after a short time. It was merely a sign of returning strength.

'Where is the Abbé Drucquer?' he asked abruptly.

'He left us some time ago,' was the guarded reply.

'He spoke of going abroad,' said Christian, deliberately ignoring the sub-prior's tone.

'The Father Provincial told me that the Abbé has gone abroad—to India—to spread there the Holy Light to such as are still in darkness.'

The young journalist thought that he detected again a faint suggestion of antagonism in the sub-prior's voice. The manner in which the information was imparted was almost an insult to the Provincial. It was a repetition of his words, given in such a

manner that had the speaker been a man of subtle tongue it would have implied grave doubt.

Christian was somewhat surprised that René Druequer should have attained his object so quickly. He never suspected that he himself might have had much to do with it, that it had been deemed expedient to remove the young priest beyond the possible reach of his influence, because he was quite unconscious of this influence. He did not know that its power had affected René Druequer, and that some reflection of it had even touched the self-contained Provincial—that it was even now making this old sub-prior talk more openly than was prudent or wise. He happened to be taking the question from a very different point of view.

CHAPTER XXV.

BACK TO WORK.

DAY by day Christian Vellacott recovered strength. The enforced rest, and perhaps also the monastic peacefulness of his surroundings, contributed greatly towards this. In mental matters as in physical we are subject to contagion, and from the placid recluses, vegetating unheeded in the heart of Brittany, their prisoner acquired a certain restfulness of mind which was eminently beneficial to his body. Life inside those white walls was so sleepy and withal so pleasant that it was physically and mentally impossible to think and worry over events that might be passing in the outer world.

Presently, however, Christian began to feel idle, which is a good sign in invalids; and soon the days became long and irksome. He began to take an increased interest in his surroundings, and realised at once how little he knew of the existence going on about him. Though he frequently passed, in the dim corridors and cloisters, a silent grey-clad figure, exchanging perhaps with him a scarcely perceptible salutation, he had never spoken with any other inmates of the monastery than the Provincial and the sub-prior.

He noticed also that the watchful care of the nurse had imperceptibly glided into that of a warder. He was never allowed out of his cell unless accompanied by the sub-prior—in fact, he was a state prisoner. His daily walks never extended beyond the one

path near the potato bed, or backwards and forwards at the sunny end of the garden, where the huge pears hung ripely. From neither point was any portion of the surrounding country visible, but the Provincial could not veil the sun, and Christian knew where lay the west and where the east.

No possible opportunity for escape presented itself, but the Englishman was storing up strength and knowledge all the while. He knew that things would not go on for long like this, and felt that the Provincial would sooner or later summon him to the long room at the end of the corridor upon the upper floor.

This call came to him three weeks after the day when the two men had met in the garden—nine weeks after the Englishman's captivity had commenced.

'My son,' said the sub-prior one afternoon, 'the Father Provincial wishes to speak with you to-day at three.'

Christian glanced up at the great monastery clock, which declared the time to be a quarter to three.

'I am ready,' he said quietly. There was no tremor in his voice or light in his eyes, and he continued walking leisurely by the side of the old monk; but a sudden thrill of pleasant anticipation warmed his heart.

A little later they entered the monastery and mounted the stone stairs together. As they walked along the corridor the clock in the tower overhead struck three.

'I will wait for you at the foot of the stairs,' said the monk slowly, as if with some compunction. Then he led the way to the end of the corridor and knocked at the door. He stood back, as if the Provincial were in the habit of keeping knockers waiting. Such was, at all events, the case now, and some minutes elapsed before a clear low voice bade him enter.

The monk opened the door and stood back against the wall for Christian to pass in. The Provincial was seated at the table near the window, which was open, the afternoon being sultry although the autumn was nearly over. At his left hand stood the small Venetian mirror which enabled him to see who was behind him without turning round.

As Christian crossed the room the Provincial rose and bowed slightly, with one of his slow soft glances. Then he indicated the chair at the left-hand side of the table, and said, without looking up:

'Be good enough—Mr. Vellacott.'

When they were both seated the Provincial suddenly raised his eyes and fixed them upon the Englishman's face. The action was slightly dramatic, but very effective, and clearly showed that he was accustomed to find the eyes of others quail before his. Christian met the gaze with a calmness more difficult to meet than open defiance. After a moment they turned away simultaneously.

'I need scarcely,' said the Provincial, with singular sweetness of manner, which, however, was quite devoid of servility, 'apologise to you, monsieur, for speaking in French, as it is almost your native language.'

Christian bowed, at the same time edging somewhat nearer to the table.

'There are one or two matters,' continued the Jesuit, speaking faster, 'upon which I have been instructed to treat with you; but first I must congratulate you upon your restoration to health. Your illness has been very serious—I trust that you have had nothing to complain of—in the treatment which you have received at our hands.'

Christian, while sitting quite motionless, was making an exhaustive survey of the room.

'On the contrary,' he said, in a conventional tone which, in comparison to his companion's manner, was almost brutal, 'it is probably owing to the care of the sub-prior that I am alive at the present moment, and——'

He stopped suddenly; an almost imperceptible motion of the Jesuit's straight eyebrows warned him.

'And——?' repeated the Provincial, interrogatively. He leant back in his chair with an obvious air of interest.

'And I am very grateful—to him.'

'The reverend father is a great doctor,' said the Jesuit lightly. 'Excuse me,' he continued, rising and leaning across the table, 'I will close the window; the air from the river begins to grow cool.'

The journalist moved slightly, looking over his shoulder towards the window; at the same moment he altered, with his elbow, the position of the small mirror standing upon the table. Instead of reflecting the whole room, including the door at the end, it now reproduced the blank wall at the side opposed to the curtained recess where the bed was placed.

'And now, Mr. Vellacott,' continued the Jesuit, reseating himself, 'I must beg your attention. I think there can be no harm in a little mutual frankness, and—and it seems to me that

a certain allowance for respective circumstances can well be demanded.'

He paused, and, opening the leather-bound manuscript book, became absorbed for a moment in the perusal of one of its pages.

'From your pen,' he then said, in a business-like monotone, 'there has emanated a serious and hitherto unproved charge against the Holy Society of Jesus. It came at a critical moment in the political strife then raging in France; and, in proportion to the attention it attracted, harm and calumny accrued to the Society. I am told that your motives were purely patriotic, and your desire was nothing beyond a most laudable one of keeping your countrymen out of difficulties. Before I had the pleasure of seeing you I said, "This is a young journalist who, at any expense, and even at the sacrifice of truth, wishes to make a name in the world and force himself into public attention." Since then I have withdrawn that opinion.'

During these remarks the Provincial had not raised his eyes from the table. He now leant back in the chair and contemplated his own clasped hands. Christian had listened attentively. His long grave face was turned slightly towards the Provincial, and his eyes were perhaps a little softer in their gaze.

'I endeavoured,' he said, 'some weeks ago, to explain my position.'

The Jesuit inclined his head. Then he raised his long white finger to his upper lip, stroking the blue skin pensively.

Presently he raised his eyes to the Englishman's face, and in their velvety depths Christian thought he detected an expression which was almost pleading. It seemed to express a desire for help, for some slight assistance in the performance of a difficult task. He never again looked into those eyes in all his life, but the remembrance of them remained in his heart for many years after the surrounding incidents had passed away from memory and interest. He knew that the Soul looking forth from that pale and heartless face was of no ordinary mould or strength. In later years when they were both grey-haired men whose Yea or No was of some weight in the world—one speaking with the great and open voice of the Press, the other working subtly, dumbly, secretly—their motives may have clashed once more, their souls may have met and touched, as it were, over the heads of the People, but they never looked into each other's eyes again.

The Provincial moved uneasily.

'It has been a most unfortunate business,' he said gently, and after a pause continued more rapidly, with his eyes upon the book. 'I am instructed to lay before you the apologies of the Society for the inconvenience to which you have been put. Your own sense of justice will tell you that we were bound to defend ourselves in every way. You have done us a great injury, and, as is our custom, we have contradicted nothing. The Society of Jesus does not defend itself in the vain hope of receiving justice at the hands of men. I am now in a position to inform you again that you are at liberty—free to go where you will, when you will—and that any sum you may require is at your disposal to convey you home to England—on your signing a promise never to write another word for private or public circulation on the subject of the Holy Order of Jesus, or to dictate to the writing of another.'

'I must refuse,' said Christian laconically, almost before the words had left the Jesuit's lips. 'As I explained before, I am simply a public servant: what I happen to know must ever be at the public disposal, or I am useless.'

A short silence followed this remark. When at length the Provincial spoke his tone was cold and reserved.

'Of course,' he said, 'I expected a refusal—at first. I am instructed to ask you to reconsider your refusal and to oblige me, at the end of a week, with the result of your meditations. If it remains a refusal, another week will be accorded, and so on.'

'Until——?'

The Jesuit closed the book upon the table in front of him, and with great care altered its position so that it lay quite squarely. He raised his eyebrows slightly and glanced sideways towards the Englishman. At that moment the bell began summoning the devotees to their evening meal, its deep tone vibrating weirdly through the bare corridors.

'Until you accept,' suggested he softly.

Christian looked at him speculatively. The faintest suspicion of a smile hovered for a moment in his eyes, and then he turned and looked out of the window.

'I hope, monsieur,' continued the Jesuit, 'that when I have the pleasure of seeing you—a week hence—your health will be quite re-established!'

'Thank you!'

'And in the meantime I shall feel honoured by your asking for anything you may require.'

'Thank you!' answered Christian again. He was still looking over his shoulder, down at the brown river which ran immediately below the window.

'Please excuse my rising to open the door for you,' said the Provincial with cool audacity, 'but I have a few words to write before joining our brethren at their evening repast.'

Christian turned and looked at him vaguely. There was a peculiar gleam in his eyes, and he was breathing heavily. Then he rose and, as he passed the Jesuit, bowed slightly in acknowledgment of his grave salutation. He walked quickly down the length of the room, which was not carpeted, and opened the door, closing it again with some noise immediately. But he never crossed the threshold. To the man sitting at the table it was as if the Englishman had left the room closing the door after him.

Presently the Provincial glanced at the mirror, from mere habit, and found that it was displaced. He rearranged it thoughtfully, so that the entire room was included in its field of reflection.

'I wonder,' he said aloud, 'when and why he did that!'

Then he returned to his writing. In a few minutes, however, he rose and pushed back his chair. With his hands clasped behind his back he stood and gazed fixedly out of the window. Beneath him the brown water glided past with curling eddy and gleaming ripple, while its soft murmur was the only sound that broke the pathetic silence surrounding this lonely man. His small and perfectly formed face was quite expressionless; the curve of his thin lips meant nothing; all the suppressed vitality of his being lay in those deep soft eyes over which there seemed to be a veil. Presently he turned, and with lithe smooth steps passed down the long room and out of the door.

Instantly Christian Vellacott came from his hiding-place within the recess. He ran to the window and opened it noiselessly. A moment later he was standing upon the stone sill. The afternoon sun shone full upon his face, as he stood there and showed a deep red flush on either cheek. Slowly he stooped forward, holding with one hand to the woodwork of the window while he examined critically the surface of the water. Suddenly he threw his arms forward and like a black shadow dived noiselessly, passing into the depth without a splash. When he rose to the surface he turned to look at the monastery. The Provincial's window was the only outlet directly on to the river.

The stream was rapid, and after swimming with it for a short

time he left the water and lay down to recover his breath under the friendly cover of some bushes. There he remained for some time, while the short October twilight closed over the land. A man just dragged from the jaws of death, he lay in his wet clothes where he first found shelter without even troubling to move his limbs from the pools of water slowly accumulating. Already the monastery was a thing of the past. With the rapid forethought of his generation he was already looking to the future. He knew too well the spirit of the people in France to fear pursuit. The monks never ventured beyond their own walls except on ostentatious missions of charity. The machinations of the Society of Jesus were less to be feared in France than in England, and he had only to take his story to the nearest sub-prefecture to raise a storm of popular opinion in his favour. But this was not his project. With him, as in all human plans, his own personal feelings came before the possible duty he owed to the public. He lay beneath the bramble undergrowth, and speculated as to what might have taken place subsequent to his disappearance. At that moment the fortunes of the 'Beacon' gave him no food for thought. What Mr. Bodery and his subordinate might, or might not, think found no interest in his mind. All his speculations were confined to events at St. Mary Western, and the outcome of his meditations was that when the friendly cover of darkness lay on the land he rose and started to walk briskly across the well-tilled country towards the north.

That portion of Brittany which lies along the northern coast is a pastoral land where sleep occupies the larger half of man's life. Although it was only evening, an hour when Paris and London recover, as it were, from the previous night's vigil and brighten up into vigour, the solitary Englishman passed unheeded through the squalid villages, unmolested along the winding roads. Mile after mile of scanty forest land and rich meadow were left behind, while, except for a few heavily breathing cattle, he met no sign of life. At last he came upon a broader road which bore unmistakable signs of military workmanship in its construction, and here he met, and passed with laconic greeting, a few peasant women returning with empty baskets from some neighbouring market; or perhaps a 'cantonnier' here and there, plodding home with 'sabots' swinging heavily and round shoulders bent beneath the burden of his weighty stone-breaking implements.

Following the direction of this road his course was now towards

the north-east, with more tendency to the eastward than he desired, but there was no choice. About eight o'clock he passed through a small village, which appeared to be already wrapped in stupid slumber such as attends the peasant's pillow. A cock crowed loudly, and in reply a dog barked with some alarm, but Christian was already beyond the village upon the deserted high road again.

He now began to feel the weakening effect of his illness; his legs became cramped, and he frequently rested at the roadside. The highway was running still more to the eastward now, and Christian was just beginning to consider the advisability of taking to the country again, when it joined a broader road cut east and west. Here he stopped short, and, raising his head, stood quite still for some moments.

'Ah!' he muttered. 'The sea. I smell the sea.'

He now turned to the left, and advanced along the newly discovered road towards the west. As he progressed the pungent odour of seaweed refreshed him and grew stronger every moment. Suddenly he became aware that although high land lay upon his left hand, there was to his right a hollow darkness without shadow or depth. No merry splash of waves came to explain this; the smell of the sea was there, but the joyous tumble of its waters was not to be heard. The traveller stooped low and peered into the darkness. Gradually he discerned a distant line of horizon, and to that point there seemed to stretch a vast dead sheet of water without light or motion. Upon his ears there stole a soft bubbling sound, varied occasionally by a tiny ripple. Suddenly a flash of recollection appeared to pass through the watcher's mind, and he muttered an exclamation of surprise as he turned towards the east and endeavoured to pierce the gloom. He was right. Upon the distant line of horizon a jagged outline cut the sky. It was like the form of a huge tooth jutting out from the softer earth. Such is Mont St. Michel standing grandly alone in the midst of a shallow sullen sea, the only firm thing among the quaking sands, the only stone for miles around.

'The Bay of Cancale!' reflected Christian. 'If I keep to the westward I shall reach St. Mâlo before ten o'clock!'

And he set off with renewed vigour. From his feet there stretched away to the north a great dead level of quicksand, seething, bubbling and heaving in the darkness. The sea, and yet no sea. Neither honest land nor rolling water.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SIGNOR BRUNO.

SILAS LEBRUN, captain and part owner of the brig *Agnes and Mary* of Jersey, was an early riser. Moreover, the old gentleman entertained peculiar views as to the homage due to Morpheus. He made no elaborate toilet before entering the presence of that most lovable god. Indeed he always slept in his boots, and the cabin boy had on several occasions invited the fore-castle hands to believe that he neither removed the ancient sealskin cap from his head nor the wooden pipe from his lips when slumber soothed his senses ; but this statement was always set aside as unauthenticated.

In person the ancient sailor was almost square, with short legs and a body worthy of promotion to something higher. His face was wrinkled and brown, like the exterior of that incomprehensible fruit the medlar, which is never ripe till it is bad, and then it is to be avoided. A yellow-grey beard clustered closely round a short chin, and when perchance the sealskin cap was absent yellow-grey hair of a similar hue completed the circle, standing up as high from his brow as fell the beard downward from his chin. A pair of intensely blue eyes, liquid always with the milk of human kindness, rendered the hirsute medlar a pleasant thing to look at.

The *Agnes and Mary* was ready for sea, her cargo of potatoes, with a little light weight in the way of French beans and eggs, comfortably stowed, and as Captain Lebrun emerged from what he was pleased to call his 'state-room' with the first breath of a clear morning he performed his matutinal toilet with a certain sense of satisfaction. This operation was simple, consisting merely in the passage of four very brown fingers through the yellow-grey hair, and a hurried dispersal of the tobacco ash secreted in his beard.

The first object that met the mariner's astonished gaze was the long black form of a man stretched comfortably upon the cabin locker. The green mud adhering to the sleeper's thin shoes showed that he had climbed on board at low tide when the harbour was dry.

Captain Lebrun gazed meditatively at the intruder for some moments. Then he produced a powerfully scented pipe of venerable appearance, which had been, at various stages of its existence,

bound in a seamanlike manner with pieces of tarred yarn. He slowly filled this object, and proceeded to inform it in a husky voice that he was 'blowed.' The pipe was, apparently, in a similar condition, as it refused absolutely to answer to the powerful suction applied to it.

He then seated himself with some difficulty upon the corner of the low table, and examined the sleeper critically.

'Poor devil!' he again said, addressing himself to his pipe. 'He's one of them priest fellows.—Hi, mister!' he observed, raising his voice.

Christian Vellacott woke up at once, and took in the situation without delay. He was not of those who must go through terrible contortions before regaining their senses after sleep.

'Good morning, captain!' he observed, pleasantly.

'Oh—yourn't a parlee voo, then!'

'No, I'm an Englishman.'

'Indeed. Then you'll excuse me, but what in the name of glory are you doing here?'

Christian sat up, and looked at his muddy shoes with some interest.

'Well, the truth is that I am bolting. I want to get across to England. I saw where you hailed from by your rig, and clambered on board last night. It seemed to me that when an Englishman is in a hole he cannot do better than go to a fellow-countryman for help.'

Captain Lebrun made a mighty effort to force a passage through his pipe, and was rewarded by a very high-pitched squeak.

'Ay!' he said, doubtfully. 'But what sort of hole is it? Nothing dirty, I'm hopin'. Who are yer? Why are ye running away, and who are ye runnin' from?'

Though a trifle blunt the sailor's manner was not unfriendly, and Christian laughed before replying.

'Well,' he said, 'to tell you the whole story would take a long time. You remember perhaps there was a row, about two months ago, respecting some English rifles found in Paris!'

'Of course I remember that; we had a lot o' trouble with the Customs just then. The thing was ferreted out by a young newspaper fellow!'

Christian rubbed his hands slowly together. He was terribly anxious to hear the sequel.

'I am that newspaper fellow,' he said, with a quick smile.

Captain Lebrun slowly stood up. He contemplated his pipe thoughtfully, then laying it upon the table he turned solemnly towards Christian, and held out a broad brown hand which was covered with scales in lieu of skin.

'Shake hands, mister?' he said.

Christian obliged him.

'And now,' he said quickly, 'I want to know what has happened since—since I left England. Has there been a great row? Has—has anybody wondered where I was?'

The old sailor may have had his suspicions. He may have guessed that Christian Vellacott had not left England at the dictates of his own free will, for he looked at him very kindly with his liquid blue eyes, and replied slowly:—

'I couldn't say that *nobody* hasn't been wonderin' where ye was, but—but there's been nothing in the papers!'

'That is all right! And now will you give me a passage, captain?'

'Course I will! We sail about eleven this morning. I'm loaded and cleared out. But I should like you to have a change o' clothes. Can't bear to see ye in them black things. It makes me feel as if I was talkin' to a priest.'

'I should like nothing better,' replied Christian, as he rose and contemplated his own person reflectively.

'Come into my state-room, then. I've got a few things of my own, and a bit of a slop-chest; jerseys and things as I sell to the men.'

The captain's wardrobe was of a marine character and somewhat rough in texture. He had, however, a coat and waistcoat of thick blue pilot-cloth which fitted Christian remarkably well, but the continuations thereof were so absurdly out of keeping with the young fellow's long limbs as to precipitate the skipper on to the verge of apoplexy. When he recovered, and his pipe was relighted, he left the cabin and went forward to borrow a pair of the required articles from Tom Slake, an ordinary seaman of tall and slim proportions. In a short time Christian Vellacott bore the outward semblance of a very fair specimen of the British tar, except that his cheeks were bleached and sunken, which discrepancy was promptly commented upon by the blunt old sailor.

Secrecy was absolutely necessary, so Tom, of the long legs, was the only person to whom Christian's presence was made known;

and he it was who (in view of a possible berth as steward later on) was entrusted with the simple culinary duties of the vessel.

Breakfast, as served up by Tom, was of a noble simplicity. A long shiny loaf of yesterday's bread, some butter in a saucer—which vessel was deemed unnecessary and entirely superfluous in connection with cups—brown sugar in an old mustard-tin, with portions of yellow paper adhering to it, and solid slices of bacon brought from the galley in their native frying-pan. Such slight drawbacks, however, as there might have been in the matter of table-ware disappeared before the sense of kindly hospitality with which Captain Lebrun poured the tea into a cracked cup and a borrowed pannikin, dropping in the sugar with careful judgment from his brown fingers. Such defects as there might have lurked in the culinary art as carried on in the galley vanished before the friendly solicitude with which Tom tilted the frying-pan to pour into Christian's plate a bright flow of bacon-fat cunningly mingled with cinders.

When the meal had been duly despatched Captain Lebrun produced his pipe and proceeded to fill it, after having extracted from its inward parts the usual high-toned squeak.

Christian lent back against the bulkhead with his hands buried deeply in Tom's borrowed pockets. He felt much more at home in pilot cloth than in cashmere.

'There is one more thing I should like to borrow,' he said.

'Ay?' repeated the captain interrogatively, as he searched in his waistcoat pocket for a match. 'Ay, what is it?'

'A pipe. I have not had a smoke for two months.'

The captain struck a light upon his leg.

'I've got one somewhere,' he replied, reassuringly; 'carried it for many years now, just in case this one fell overboard or got broke.'

Tom, who happened to be present, smiled audibly behind a hand which was hardly a recommendation for the coveted berth of steward, but Christian looked at the battered pipe with sympathetic gravity.

At ten o'clock the *Agnes and Mary* warped out of harbour and dropped lazily down the Rance, setting sail as she went. Christian had spent most of the morning in the little cabin smoking Captain Lebrun's reserve pipe, and seeking to establish order among the accounts of the ship. The accounts were the *bête noire* of the old sailor's existence. Upon his own confession he 'wasn't no arith-

metician,' and Christian found, upon inspecting his accounts, no cause to contradict this ambiguous statement.

When the *Agnes and Mary* was clear of the harbour he went on deck, where activity and maritime language reigned supreme. The channel was narrow and the wind light, consequently the little brig drifted more or less at her own sweet will. This would have been well enough had the waterway been clear of other vessels, but the Jersey steamer was coming in, with her yellow funnel gleaming in the sunlight, her mail-flag fluttering at her foremast, and her captain swearing on the bridge, with the whistle-pull in his hand.

Seeing that the *Agnes and Mary* had no steerage way, the captain stopped his engines for a few minutes, and then went ahead again at half-speed. This brought the vessels close together, and, as is the invariable custom in such circumstances, the two crews stared stonily at each other. On the deck were one or two passengers enjoying the morning air after a cramped and uncomfortable night. Among these was an old man with a singularly benign expression; he was standing near the after-wheel, gazing with senile placidity towards St. Mâlo. As the vessels neared each other, however, he walked towards the rail, and stood there with a pleasant smile upon his face, as if ready to exchange a greeting with any kindred soul upon the *Agnes and Mary*.

Christian Vellacott, seated upon the rail of the after-deck, saw the old man and watched him with some interest—not, however, altering his position or changing countenance. The vessels moved slowly on and, in due course, the two men were opposite to each other, each at the extreme stern of his ship.

Then the young journalist removed Captain Lebrun's spare pipe from his lips, and leaning sideways over the water, called out:

'Good morning, Signor Bruno!'

The effect of this friendly greeting upon the benevolent old gentleman was peculiar. He grasped the rail before him with both hands, and stared at the young Englishman. Then he stamped upon the deck with a sudden access of fury.

'Ah!' he exclaimed, fiercely, while a tiger-like gleam shone out from beneath his smooth white brows. 'Ah! it is you!'

Christian swung his legs idly, and smiled with some amusement across the little strip of water.

Suddenly the old man plunged his hand into the breast pocket

of his coat. He appeared to be tugging wildly at some article which was caught in the lining of his clothes, when a remarkable change came over his face. A dull red colour flew to his cheeks, and his eyes gleamed ruddily, as if shot with blood. Then without a word he fell forward with his breast against the painted rail, remained there a second, and as the two ships passed away from each other, rolled over upon his back on the clean deck, grasping a pistol in his right hand.

Christian Vellacott sat still upon the rail, swinging one leg, and smiling reflectively. He saw the old man fall and the other passengers crowd round him, but the *Agnes and Mary* had now caught the breeze and was moving rapidly out to sea, where the sunlight danced upon the water in little golden bars.

‘Apperlexy!’ said a voice in the journalist’s ear. He turned and found Captain Lebrun standing at his side looking after the steamer. ‘Apperlexy!’

‘Do you think so?’ asked Christian.

‘I do,’ was the reply given with some conviction. ‘I seen a man fall just like that; he was a broad-built man wi’ a thick neck, and in a moment of excitement he fell just like that, and died a’most at once. Apperlexy they said it was.’

‘It seemed to come over him very suddenly, did it not?’ said Christian, absently.

‘Ay, it did,’ said the captain. ‘Ye seemed to know him!’

Christian turned and looked at his companion full in the face. ‘I have met him twice,’ he said quietly. ‘He was in England for some years, I believe; a political refugee, he called himself.’

By sea and land Captain Lebrun had learnt to devote an exclusive attention to his own affairs, allowing other men to manage theirs, well or ill, according to their fancy. He knew that Christian Vellacott wished to tell him no more, and he was content that it should be so, but he had noticed a circumstance which, from the young journalist’s position, was probably invisible. He turned to give an order to the man at the wheel, and then walked slowly and with some difficulty (for Captain Lebrun suffered, in a quiet way, agonies from rheumatism) back towards his passenger.

‘Seemed to me,’ he said reflectively, as he looked upwards to see if the foretopsail was shivering, ‘as if he had something in his hand when a’ fell.’

Christian followed the captain’s gaze. The sails were now filling well, and there was an exhilarating sound of straining cordage

in the air while the vessel glided on. The young journalist was not an impressionable man, but he felt all these things. The sense of open freedom, the gentle rise and fall of the vessel, the whirring breeze, and the distant line of high land up the Rance towards Dinant—all these were surely worth hearing, feeling, and seeing; assuredly, they added to the joy of living.

‘Something in his hand,’ he repeated gravely; ‘what was it?’

Captain Lebrun turned sideways towards the steersman, and made a little gesture with his left hand. A wrinkle had appeared in one corner of the foretopsail. Then he looked round the horizon with a sailor’s far-seeing gaze, before replying.

‘Seemed to me,’ he mumbled, without taking his pipe from his lips, ‘that it was a revolver.’

Then the two men smoked in silence for some time. The little vessel moved steadily out towards the blue water, passing a lighthouse built upon a solitary rock, and later a lightship, with its clean red hull gleaming in the sunlight as it rose and fell lazily. So close were they to the latter that the man watching on deck waved his hand in salutation.

Still Vellacott had vouchsafed no reply to Captain Lebrun’s strange statement. He sat on the low rail, swinging one leg monotonously, while the square little sailor stood at his side with that patient maritime reflectiveness which is being slowly killed by the quicker ways of steam.

‘My calling brings me into contact with a rum lot of people,’ said the young fellow at last, ‘and I suppose all of us make enemies without knowing it.’

With this vague elucidation the little skipper was forced to content himself. He gave a grunt of acquiescence, and walked forward to superintend the catheading of the anchor.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN THE RUE ST. GINGOLPHE AGAIN.

ONE would almost have said that the good citizen Jacquetôt was restless and disturbed. It was not that the little tobacco shop left aught to be desired in the way of order, neither had the tobacco-nist quitted his seat at the window-end of the counter. But he was not smoking, and at short intervals he drew aside the little

red curtain and looked out into the quiet Rue St. Gingolphe with a certain eagerness.

The tobacconist was not in the habit of going to meet things. He usually waited for them to come to him. But on this particular evening of September in a year which it is not expedient to name, he seemed to be looking out into the street in order that he might not be taken by surprise in the event of an arrival. Moreover he mopped his vast forehead at unnecessarily frequent intervals, just as one may note a snuff-taker have recourse to that solace more frequently when he is agitated than when a warm calm reigns within his breast.

'So quiet—so quiet,' he muttered, 'in our little street—and in the others—who knows? It would appear that they have their shutters lowered there.'

He listened intently, but there was no sound except the clatter of an occasional cart or the distant whistle of a Seine steamer.

Then the tobacconist returned to the perusal of the 'Petit Journal.' Before he had skimmed over many lines, he looked up sharply and drew aside the red curtain. Yes! It was some one at last. The footsteps were hurried and yet hesitating—the gait of a person not knowing his whereabouts. And yet the man who entered the shop a moment later was evidently the same who had come to the citizen Jacquetôt when last we met him.

'Ah!' exclaimed the tobacconist. 'It is you!'

'No,' replied the other. 'It is not. I am not the citizen—Morot—I think you call it.'

'But, yes!' exclaimed the fat man in amazement. 'You are that citizen, and you are also the Vicomte d'Audierne.'

The new-comer was looking round him curiously; he stepped towards the curtained door, and turned the handle.

'I am,' he said, 'his brother. We are twins. There is a resemblance. Is this the room? Yes!'

'Yes, monsieur. It is! But never was there such a resemblance.'

The tobacconist mopped his head breathlessly.

'Go,' said the other, 'and get a mattress. Bring it and lay it on this table. My brother is wounded. He has been hit.'

Jacquetôt rose laboriously from his seat. He knew now that this was not the Vicomte d'Audierne. This man's method was quite different. He spoke with a quiet air of command, not doubting that his orders would be obeyed. He was obviously not

in the habit of dealing with the People. The Vicomte d'Audierne had a different manner of speaking to different people—this man, who resembled him so strangely, gave his orders without heeding the reception of them.

The tobacconist was essentially a man of peace. He passed out of a small door in the corner of the shop, obeying without a murmur, and leaving the new-comer alone.

A moment later the sound of wheels awoke the peaceful stillness of the Rue St. Gingolphe. The vehicle stopped, and at the same instant the man passed through the little curtained doorway into the room at the back of the shop, closing the door after him.

The gas was turned very low, and in the semi-darkness he stood quite still, waiting. He had not long to wait; he had scarcely closed the door when it was opened again, and some one entered rapidly, closing it behind him. Then the first comer raised his arm and turned up the gas.

Across the little table, in the sudden flood of light, two men stood looking at each other curiously. They were so startlingly alike, in height and carriage and every feature, that there was something weird and unpleasant in their action—in their silence.

'Ah!' said the last comer. 'It is thou. I almost fired?'

And he threw down on the table a small revolver.

'Why have you done this?' continued the Vicomte d'Audierne. 'I thought we agreed sixteen years ago that the world was big enough to contain us both without meeting, if we exercised a little care.'

'She is dead,' replied the brother. 'She died two years ago—the wife of Prangius—what does it matter now?'

'I know that—but why did you come?'

'I was ordered to Paris by the General. I was near you at the barricade, and I heard the bullet hit you. Where is it?'

The Vicomte looked down at his hand, which was pressed to his breast; the light of the gas flickered, and gleamed on his spectacles as he did so.

'In my chest,' he replied. 'I am simply dripping with blood. It has trickled down my legs into my boots. Very hot at first—and then very cold.'

The other looked at him curiously, and across his velvety eyes there passed that strange contraction which has been noted in the glance of the Vicomte d'Audierne.

'I have sent for a mattress,' he said. 'That bullet must come out. A doctor is following me; he will be here on the instant.'

'One of your Jesuits?'

'Yes—one of my Jesuits.'

The Vicomte d'Audierne smiled and winced. He staggered a little, and clutched at the back of a chair. The other watched him without emotion.

'Why do you not sit down?' he suggested, coldly. 'There are none of your—*People*—here to be impressed.'

Again the Vicomte smiled.

'Yes,' he said smoothly, 'we work on different lines, do we not? I wonder which of us has dirtied his hands the most. Which of the two—the two fools who quarrelled about a woman. Ha? And she married a third—a dolt. Thus are they made—these women!'

'And yet,' said the Jesuit, 'you have not forgotten.'

The Vicomte looked up slowly. It seemed that his eyelids were heavy, requiring an effort to lift them.

'I do not like to hear the rooks call—that is all,' he said.

The other turned away his soft, slow glance, the glance that had failed to overcome Christian Vellacott's quiet defiance—

'Nor I,' he said. 'It makes one remember.'

There was a short silence, and then the Jesuit spoke—sharply and suddenly.

'Sit down, you fool!' he said. 'You are fainting.'

The Vicomte obeyed, and at the same moment the door opened and the tobacconist appeared, pushing before him a mattress.

The Jesuit laid aside his hat, revealing the tonsure gleaming whitely amidst his jetty hair, and helped to lay the mattress upon the table. Then the two men, the Provincial and the tobacconist of the Rue St. Gingolphe, lifted the wounded aristocrat gently and placed him upon the improvised bed. True to his blood the Vicomte d'Audierne uttered no sound of agony, but as his brother began to unbutton the butcher's blouse in which he was disguised he fainted quietly. Presently the doctor arrived. He was quite a young man, with shifting grey eyes, and he saluted the Provincial with a nervous obsequy which was unpleasant to look upon. The deftness with which he completed the task of laying bare the wound was notable. His fingers were too clever to be quite honest. When, however, he was face to face with the little blue-

rimmed orifice that disfigured the Vicomte's muscular chest, the expression of his face—indeed his whole manner—changed. His eyes lost their shiftiness—he seemed to forget the presence of the great man standing at the other side of the table.

While he was selecting a probe from his case of instruments the Vicomte d'Audierne opened his eyes.

'Ah!' said the doctor, noting this at once. 'You got this on the Boulevard?'

'Yes.'

'How did you get here?' He was feeling the wounded man's pulse now.

'Cab.'

'All the way?'

'Of course.'

'Who carried you into this room?' asked the doctor, returning to his case of instruments.

'No one! I walked.' The doctor's manner, quick and nonchalant, evidently aggravated his patient.

'Why did you do that?'

He was making his preparations while he spoke, and never looked at the Vicomte.

'In order to avoid attracting attention.'

This brought the doctor's glance to his face, and the result was instantaneous. The young man started and into his eyes there came again the shifty expression, as he looked from the face of the patient to that of the Provincial standing motionless at the other side of the table. He said nothing, however, and returned with a peculiar restraint to his preparations. It is probable that his silence was brought about by the persistent gaze of two pairs of deep velvety eyes which never left his face.

'Will monsieur take chloroform?' he asked, unfolding a clean pocket handkerchief, and taking from his waistcoat pocket a small phial.

'No!'

'But—I beg of you——'

'It is not necessary,' persisted the Vicomte, calmly.

The doctor looked across to the Provincial and made a hopeless little movement of the shoulders, accompanied by an almost imperceptible elevation of the eyebrows.

The Jesuit replied by looking meaningly at the small glass-stoppered bottle.

Then the doctor muttered :

‘As you will!’

He had laid his instruments out upon the mattress—the gas was turned up as high as it would go. Everything was ready. Then he turned his back a moment and took off his coat, which he laid upon a chair, returning towards the bed with one hand behind his back.

Quick as thought, he suddenly darted forward and pressed the clean handkerchief over the wounded man’s mouth and nose. The Vicomte d’Audierne gave a little smothered exclamation of rage, and raised his arms; but the Jesuit was too quick for him, and pinned him down upon the mattress.

After a moment the doctor removed the handkerchief, and the Vicomte lay unconscious and motionless, his delicate lips drawn back in anger, so that the short white teeth gleamed dangerously.

‘It is possible,’ said the surgeon, feeling his pulse again, ‘that monsieur has killed himself by walking into this room.’

Like a cat over its prey, the young doctor leant across the mattress. Without looking round he took up the instruments he wanted, knowing the order in which they lay. He had been excellently taught. The noiseless movements of his white fingers were marvellously dexterous—neat, rapid, and finished. The evil-looking instruments gleamed and flashed beneath the gaslight. He had a peculiar little habit of wiping each one on his shirt-sleeve before and after use, leaving a series of thin red stripes there.

After the lapse of a minute he raised his head, wiped something which he held in his fingers, and passed it across to the Provincial.

‘That is the bullet, my father,’ he said, without ceasing his occupation, and without raising his eyes from the wounded man.

‘Will he live?’ asked the Jesuit, casually, while he examined the bullet.

‘If he tries, my father,’ was the meaning reply.

The young doctor was bandaging now, skilfully and rapidly.

‘This would be the death of a dog,’ said the Provincial, as if musing aloud; for the surgeon was busy at his trade, and the tobacconist had withdrawn some time before.

‘Better than the life of a dog,’ replied the Vicomte, in his smoothly mocking way, without opening his eyes.

It was very easy to blame one woman, and to cast reflections upon the entire sex. If these brothers had not quarrelled about that woman, they would have fallen out over something else. Some men are so; they are like a strong spirit—light, and yet potent—that floats upon the top of all other liquids and will mingle with none.

It would seem that these two could not be in the same room without quarrelling. It was only with care that (as the Jesuit had coldly observed) they could exist in the same world without clashing. Never was the Vicomte d'Audierne so cynical, so sceptical, as in the presence of his brother. Never was Raoul d'Audierne so cold, so heartless, so jesuitical, as when meeting his brother's scepticism.

Sixteen years of their life had made no difference. They were as far apart now as on one grey morning sixteen years ago, when the Vicomte d'Audierne had hurried away from the deserted shore of the Côte du Nord, leaving his brother lying upon the sand with an ugly slit in his neck. That slit had healed now, but the scar was always at his throat, and in both their hearts.

True to his training, the Provincial had not spoken the truth when he said that he had been ordered to Paris. There was only one man in the world who could order him to do anything, and that man was too wise to test his authority. Raoul d'Audierne had come to Paris for the purpose of seeing his brother—senior by an hour. There were many things of which he wished to speak, some belonging to the distant past, some to a more recent date. He wished to speak of Christian Vellacott—one of the few men who had succeeded in outwitting him—of Signor Bruno, or Max Talma, who had died within pistol range of that same Englishman, a sudden voiceless death, the result of a terrible access of passion at the sight of his face.

But this man was a Jesuit and a D'Audierne, which latter statement is full of import to those who, having studied heredity, know that wonderful *inner* history of France, which is the most romantic story of human kind. And so Raoul d'Audierne—the man whose power in the world is like that of the fires burning within the crust of the earth, unknown, unseen, immeasurable—and so he took his hat, and left the little room behind the tobacconist's shop in the Rue St. Gingolphe—beaten, frustrated.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MAKING OF CHRISTIAN VELLACOTT.

'MONEY,' Captain Lebrun was saying emphatically, as the *Agnes and Mary* drifted slowly past Gravesend pier on the rising tide. 'Hang money! Now, I should think that you make as much of it in a month as I do in a year. You're a young man, and as far as I know ye, ye're a successful one. Life spreads out before you like a clean chart. I'm an old 'un—my time is nearly up. I've lived what landmen call a hard life, and now I'm slowly goin' home. Ay, Mr. Vellacott, goin' home! And you think that with all your manifold advantages you're a happier man than me. Not a bit of it! And why? 'Cause you belong to a generation that looks so far ahead that it's afraid of bein' happy, just for fear there's sorrow a comin'. Money, and lookin' ahead, that's what spoils yer lives nowadays.'

The skipper emphasised these weighty observations by expectorating decisively into the water, and walked away, leaving Christian Vellacott with a vaguely amused smile upon his face. It is just possible that Silas Lebrun, master and owner of the *Agnes and Mary*, was nearer the mark than he thought.

An hour later, Vellacott was walking along the deserted embankment above Westminster, on the Chelsea side of the river. It was nine o'clock, for which fact Big Ben solemnly gave his word, far up in the fog. The morning was very dark, and the street lamps were still alight, while every window sent forth a gleam suggestive of early autumnal fires.

Turning up his own street he increased his pace, realising suddenly that he had not been within his own doors for more than four months. Much might have happened in that time—to change his life, perhaps. As he approached the house he saw a strange servant, an elderly woman, on her knees at the steps, and somehow the sight conveyed to his mind the thought that there was something waiting for him within that peaceful little house. He almost ran those last few yards, and sprang up the steps past the astonished woman without a word of explanation.

The gas in the narrow entrance hall was lighted, and as he threw aside his cap he perceived a warm gleam of firelight through the half-open door of the dining-room. He crossed the carpeted hall, and pushed open that door.

Near the little breakfast-table, just under the gas, stood Hilda Carew. In *his* room, standing among *his* multifarious possessions, in the act of pouring from *his* coffee-pot. She was dressed in black—he noticed that. Instead of being arranged high upon her head, her marvellous hair hung in one massive plait down her back. She looked like a tall and beautiful school-girl. He had not seen her hair like that since the old days when he had been as one of the Carews.

As he pushed open the door, she looked up; and for a moment they stood thus. She set down the coffee-pot, carefully and symmetrically, in the centre of the china stand provided for its reception—and the colour slowly left her face.

‘You have come back at last!’ she said, quite monotonously. It sounded like a remark made for the purpose of filling up an awkward silence.

Then he entered the room, and mechanically closed the door behind him. She noticed the action but did not move. He passed round the table, behind Aunt Judy’s empty chair, and they shook hands conventionally.

‘Yes,’ he said, almost breathlessly, ‘I am back—you do not seem elated by the fact.’

Suddenly she smiled—the smile that suggested, in some subtle way, a kitten.

‘Of course—I am glad—to see you.’

In a peculiar dreamy way she began to add milk to the coffee. It seemed as if this were mere play-acting, and not real life at all.

‘How is it that you are here?’ he asked, with a broken, disjointed laugh. ‘You cannot imagine how strange an effect it was—for me—to come in and see you—here—of all people.’

She looked at him gravely, and moved a step towards him.

‘Aunt Judy is dead!’ she explained, ‘and Aunt Hester is very ill. Mother is upstairs with them—*her*—now. I have just come from the room, where I have been since midnight.’

She stopped, raised her hand to her hair as if recollecting something, and stood looking sideways out of the window.

‘There is something about you this morning,’ he said, with a concentrated deliberation, ‘that brings back the old Prague days. I suppose it is that I have not seen your hair as you have it to-day—since then.’

She turned quite away from his hungry gaze, looking out of the window.

After a pause she broke the silence—with infinite tact—not speaking too hurriedly.

‘It has been a terrible week,’ she said. ‘Mother heard from Mr. Bodery that they were very ill; so we came. I never dreamt that it was so bad, when you spoke of them. Five years—it has been going on?’

‘Yes—five years. Thank you for coming, but I am sorry you should have seen it.’

‘Why?’

‘Everyone should keep guard over his own skeleton.’

She was looking at him now.

‘You look very ill,’ she said curtly. ‘Where have you been?’

‘I was kidnapped,’ he said, with a short laugh, ‘and then I got typhoid! The monks nursed me.’

‘You were in a monastery?’

‘Yes—in Brittany.’

She was idly arranging the cups and saucers with her left hand, which she seemed desirous of bringing under his notice—but he could look at nothing but her face.

‘Then,’ she said, ‘it would have been impossible to find you?’

‘Quite,’ he replied, and after a pause he added in a singularly easy manner, ‘Tell me what happened after I disappeared.’

She did not seem to like the task.

‘Well—we searched—oh! Christian, it *was* horrid!’

‘I wondered,’ he said, in a deep soft voice, ‘whether you would find it so.’

‘Yes—of course—we *all* did!’

This did not appear to satisfy him.

‘But you,’ he persisted, ‘you, yourself—what did you think?’

‘I do not know,’ she answered with painful hesitation. ‘I don’t think I thought at all.’

‘Then what did you *do*, Hilda?’

‘I—oh, we searched. We telegraphed for Mr. Bodery, who came down at once. Then Fred rode over, and placed himself at Mr. Bodery’s disposal. First he went to Paris, then to Brest. He did everything that could be done, but of course it was of no

avail. By Mr. Bodery's advice everything was kept secret. There was nothing in the newspapers.'

She stopped suddenly, and there was a silence in the room. He was looking at her curiously, still ignoring that little left hand. Only one word of her speech seemed to have attached itself to his understanding.

'Fred?' he said. 'Fred Farrar?'

'Yes—my husband!'

He turned away—walked towards the door, and then returned to the hearthrug, where he stood quite still.

'I suppose it was a quiet wedding,' he said in a hard voice, 'on my account; eh?'

'Yes,' she whispered.

He waited, but she added nothing.

Then suddenly he laughed.

'I have made a most extraordinary mistake!' he said, and again laughed.

'Oh, don't!' she exclaimed.

'Don't what?'

'Laugh.'

He came nearer to her—quite near, until his sleeve almost touched her bowed head.

'I thought—at St. Mary Western—that you loved *me*.'

She seemed to shrink away from him.

'What made me think so, Hilda?'

She raised her head, and her eyes flashed one momentary appeal for mercy—like the eyes of a whipped dog.

'Tell me,' he said sternly.

'It was,' she whispered, 'because *I* thought so myself.'

'And when I was gone you found out that you had made a mistake?'

'Yes; he was so kind, so *brave*, Christian—because he knew of my mistake.'

Christian Vellacott turned away and looked thoughtfully out of the window.

'Well,' he said, after a pause, 'so long as you do not suffer by it—'

'Oh—h,' she gasped, as if he were whipping her. She did not quite know what he meant. She does not know now.

At last he spoke again, slowly, deliberately, and without emotion.

'Some day,' he said, 'when you are older, when you have more experience of the world, you will probably fall into the habit of thanking God, in your prayers, that I am what I am. It is not because I am good—perhaps it is because I am ambitious—my father, you may remember, was considered heartless; it may be *that*. But if I were different—if I were passionate instead of being what the world calls cold and calculating—you would be—your life would be——' he stopped, and turning away he sat down wearily in Aunt Judy's arm-chair. 'You will know some day!' he said.

It is probable that she does know now. She knows, in all likelihood, that her husband would have been powerless to save her from Christian Vellacott—from herself—from that Love wherein there are no roses but only thorns.

And in the room above them Aunt Hester was dying. So wags the world. There is no attention paid to the laws of dramatic effect upon the stage of life. The scenes are produced without sequence, without apparent rhyme or reason; and Chance, the scene-shifter, is very careless, for comedies are enacted amid scenic effects calculated to show off to perfection the deepest tragedy, while tragedies are spoilt by their surroundings.

The doctor and Mrs. Carew stood at the bedside, and listened to the old woman's broken murmurings. Into her mind there had perhaps strayed a gleam of that Light which is not on the earth, for she was not abusing her great-nephew.

'Ah, Christian,' she was murmuring, 'I wish you would come. I want to thank you for your kindness, more especially to Aunt Judy. She is old, and we must make allowances. I know she is aggravating. It happened long ago, when your father was a little boy—but it altered her whole life. I think women are like that. There is something that only comes to them once. I am feeling far from well, nephew Vellacott. I think I should like to see a doctor. What does Aunt Judy think? Is she asleep?'

She turned her head to where she expected to find her sister, and in the act of turning her eyes closed. She slumbered peacefully. The two sisters had slept together for seventy years—seventy long monotonous years, in which there had been no incident, no great joy, no deep sorrow—years lost. Except for the natural growth and slow decay of their frames, they had remained stationary, while around them children had grown into men and women and had passed away.

Presently Aunt Hester opened her eyes, and they rested on the vacant pillow at her side. After a pause she slowly turned her head, and fixed her gaze upon the doctor's face. He thought that the power of speech had left her, but suddenly she spoke, quite clearly.

'Where is my sister Judith?' she asked.

There are times when the truth must be spoken, though it kill.

'Your sister died yesterday,' replied the doctor.

Aunt Hester lay quite still, staring at the ceiling. Her shrivelled fingers were picking at the counterpane. Then a gleam of intelligence passed across her face.

'And now,' she said, 'I shall have a bed to myself. I have waited long enough.'

Aunt Hester was very human, although the shadow of an angel's wing lay across her bed.

It was many years later that Christian Vellacott found himself in the presence of the Angel of Death again. A telegram from Hâvre was one day handed to him in the room at the back of the tall house in the Strand, and the result was that he crossed from Southampton to Hâvre that same night.

As the sun rose over the sea the next morning, its earliest rays glanced gaily through the open porthole of a cabin in a large ocean steamer, still panting from her struggle through tepid Eastern seas.

In this little cabin lay the Jesuit missionary, René Druequer, watching the moving reflections of the water, which played ceaselessly on the painted ceiling overhead. He had been sent home from India by a kind-hearted army surgeon; a doomed man, stricken by a climatic disease in which there was neither hope nor hurry. When the steamer arrived in the Seine it was found expedient to let the young missionary die where he lay. The local agent of the Society of Jesus was a kind-hearted man, and therefore a faithless servant. He acceded to René Druequer's prayer to telegraph for Christian Vellacott.

And now Vellacott was actually coming down the cabin stairs. He entered the cabin, and stood by the sick man's bed.

'Ah, you have come,' said the Frenchman, with that peculiar tone of pathetic humour which can only be rendered in the language that he spoke. 'But how old! Do I look as old as that, I wonder. And hard—yes, hard as steel.'

'Oh, no,' replied Vellacott. 'It may be that the hardness that was once there shows now upon my face—that is all.'

The Frenchman looked lovingly at him, with eyes like the eyes of a woman.

'And now you are a great man, they tell me.'

Vellacott shrugged his shoulders.

'In my way,' he admitted. 'And you?'

'I—I have taught.'

'Ah. And has it been a success?'

'In teaching I have learnt.'

Vellacott merely nodded his head.

'Do you know why I sent for you?' continued the missionary.

'No.'

'I sent for you in order to tell you that I burnt that letter at Audierne.'

'I came to that conclusion, for it never arrived.'

'I want you to forgive me.'

Vellacott laughed.

'I never thought of it again,' he replied, heartily.

The priest was looking keenly at him.

'I did not say "thou," but "*you*,"' he persisted gently.

Vellacott's glance wavered; he raised his head, and looked out of the open porthole across the glassy waters of the river.

'What do you mean?' he inquired.

'I thought,' said René Drucquer, 'there might be some one else—some woman—who was waiting for news.'

After a little pause the journalist replied.

'My dear Abbé,' he said, 'there is no woman in the whole world who wants news of me. And the result is, as you kindly say, I am a great man now—in my way.'

But he knew that he might have been a greater.

A VISIT TO COUNT TOLSTOI.

BEFORE starting on my journey through famine-stricken Russia I had an interview at Moscow with Count Tolstoi, and received from that high-souled man some valuable suggestions as to the conduct of my inquiry. It was only fitting that on my return I should seek out the Count, and tell him what I had seen and heard since I parted from him.

The Count had left Moscow to resume his work of relief in the province of Riazan, and was at Beghitshevka, a village in the district of Denkoffsky, situated at a distance of about sixty versts from the railway. I had arrived at Bogorodetz, a town in the province of Tula. Here I was glad to accept the hospitality of Count Bobrinsky, as the weather was very inclement.

A terrible snowstorm raged all day after my arrival at the Count's château. The château bell was kept ringing. Nevertheless two wayfarers were discovered next morning frozen to death in the snow not far from the house. Snow was still falling upon the morrow; but, as the weather showed some signs of clearing, I proceeded on my journey in a sledge drawn by two good horses, kindly provided by my host, and driven by a yemstchik who knew the road. It would take up too much space, and be foreign to the purpose of this article, to detail the incidents of this journey. I will merely say that to me, used though I had been for the past few weeks to sledge travelling, the journey was of an exciting and exhausting character. Several times my driver lost his way, through the freshly fallen snow obscuring the tracks, and once we had to stop at a village and take refuge. The latter portion of the journey lay over the ice on the upper reaches of the River Don, and I was in danger several times of being pitched out of the sledge into one of the many fissures in the ice. It may be imagined therefore that it was with a feeling of considerable relief that I found myself, after a drive of forty miles, at Panek, an estate belonging to a gentleman whose wife is sister to Countess Bobrinsky. Here I was received very kindly, and provided with quarters for the night. Before retiring to rest, and on the following day, I had several most interesting conversations with my hostess, a woman of remarkable powers of mind, who, with the

aid of her daughter, has been unremitting in attending to the wants of the peasantry around her. I must not, however, stay to report these talks.

Very opportunely, the day after my arrival at Panek, a young Cossack Sister of Mercy, who was helping Count Tolstoi, happened to call in on my hostess, and was good enough to suggest that I should return to Beghitshevka with her. I was nothing loth to accept this invitation, and we were soon speeding over the ice of the Don towards the Count's headquarters, which we reached after a journey of about three-quarters of an hour.

I was received by the Countess Maria (the Count's youngest daughter), who, to my considerable disappointment, told me that her father was not at home. Noticing that the Countess and the other ladies of the house betrayed some excitement on my arrival, I inquired the reason.

'The approach of a sledge,' explained the Countess, 'always excites us. Every minute we fear that gendarmes may come to take away our father.'

'They would hardly do that,' I replied, trying to reassure her. It was impossible, however, for me not to recognise that the apprehensions expressed for the Count's safety were by no means groundless. The enemies of the inoffensive Count are many, and it is not their fault that his liberties have not already been seriously curtailed. By persistently and maliciously misrepresenting his actions and words, they do their best to stir up public opinion against him.

It appeared from what the Countess said that an incorrect translation of the article which her father had contributed a month or two before to the 'Daily Telegraph,' on the social condition of the people, had been published in the 'Moscow Gazette,' which made it appear that the Count had incited the peasantry to revolt, and had in this way brought the Count into bad odour with the Government. It is some satisfaction to know that the editor of the 'Gazette,' who is a personal adversary of Tolstoi's, had, in endeavouring to deal a blow at the Count's prestige and influence, nearly brought his own journalistic career to an end. Had it not been, it is said, for the fact that the 'Gazette' is semi-official, it would have been suppressed, for it had circulated matter of a seditious character. As it is, its editor has received two warnings. A third offence and the paper will be extinct.

I had previously heard about this article of Tolstoi's. A week

before, when I arrived in Samara from Patroffka, I found that the townsfolk were discussing it with some vehemence and excitement. The prevailing opinion appeared to be that the author of the article was mad, and ought to be shut up in a lunatic asylum.

A tchinovnik's wife exclaimed in my hearing, 'He is throwing knives to the people to cut our throats with! He ought to be sent to Siberia, for he is stirring up the people!' To this an old Samara friend of mine, who has been exerting himself to the utmost on behalf of the peasantry, replied, 'Well, if they did cut my throat it would not surprise me, although I have helped them as well as I could. They are unable to distinguish friends from enemies.' Thereupon an official of high rank who overheard the conversation said, with a frankness which I did not expect to find in one of his class, 'I believe that every word Count Tolstoi has written is perfectly true; nevertheless, he has no right to let the common people know the truth.'

After my conversation with the Countess Maria I went for a stroll round the house. The dwelling had been the abode of one of Count Tolstoi's most intimate friends, the recently deceased M. N. Rayeffsky, the first Russian gentleman to start 'free tables' for the starving peasantry, and the first, I believe, to lose his life through his efforts to relieve the prevailing distress. He died, I understand, from a fever caught while visiting a starving family. His house is a large and rambling one-storied structure, with an iron-sheeted roof and a balcony in front, and is pleasantly situated on the high banks of the Don. Its appearance in summer would probably be considered picturesque, but at the time of my visit it was not very attractive. Internally, the house was in a state of disrepair; externally, a thaw having set in, it was surrounded by water. At the moment of writing, when the roads all over the country are breaking up, the approach to it must be of a very uninviting character.

The library of the house was interesting, as it showed that its late occupant had been a man of some culture. Amongst M. Rayeffsky's books I observed a volume of Shakespeare, an old English edition of Virgil of date 1677, 'The English Kingdom in Asia,' and various works on agriculture and mathematics. Around the walls were hung family portraits.

In the afternoon I had another drive with the Cossack maiden. She had come from Moscow, but was a typical South Russian, being stoutly built, dark-complexioned, rosy-cheeked, and as brown as a

berry. Nevertheless, she was thoroughly at home with the Riazan peasants. She would have been welcome anywhere, for she was one lump of good-nature. Tolstoi she worshipped, and would discuss with his daughter his ideas for an hour at a time.

The Count did not return at all on the day of my arrival. I discovered, however, that although he personally was absent, he had left behind him in the person of my young hostess an excellent representative. His daughter was in fact a small replica of him. To talk with her was to talk by proxy with him. Nor did she merely reflect his ideas; she closely resembled him also in her appearance and disposition. We got on to the subject of music, and she was not long in stating her agreement with the views expressed by her father on that topic in the 'Kreutzer Sonata.' The tendency of music and singing was, she held, to promote immorality. The net effect on the mind was an evil one. Operas were not good things. We should be better without them.

I could not but express some dissent. A good song and a fine piece of music had, I protested, as good an effect upon me as a sermon or a good book had. What was harmful was not, in my opinion, the use of music, but the abuse. All music was not bad; there was good music and bad music, just as there was good and bad art. Since, however, the introduction of the opera the true singer had, I admitted, almost ceased to exist for the last two centuries. The opera had monopolised the greatest talents and the most exquisite voices, and those talents and voices were not best employed on the stage of an opera house. True poetry being the highest expression of the human mind, and the ability to compose and interpret it the choicest gift of nature, it was pre-eminently a talent which should be put to a practical and ethical use. Singers (by whom I meant poets as well as vocalists) should really be the leaders and rulers of mankind; they were at present only the darlings and playthings of a pleasure-seeking public—mere musical boxes, utterly failing to realise what should be their ideal. They were the recipients of homage and flattery from hysterical men and women; but when their voices ceased they were forgotten.

From music the subject changed to 'resistance to evil.' Here again it was as if the Count himself was talking. Under no circumstances, contended the young Countess, was resistance to evil justifiable. Here again, too, I expressed dissent, without, however, convincing. Thieves and blackguards, I argued, ought to be

punished, and murderers if not hanged ought to be sent to Siberia. If evil-doers were not to be punished, if evil, wherever found, was not to be resisted, how could civilised society exist? The low moral tone prevailing amongst all classes throughout the empire was, I contended, only to be expected in a country where criminals were treated with such laxity as in Russia.

Our conversation on this subject was interrupted by the arrival of the post. The young Countess acts as her father's secretary and opens all his letters. In the letters which came that night were drafts to the value of R. 3,000 (300*l.*), two-thirds of which sum had been sent by English and American friends, the remainder by Tolstoi's Russian admirers. Every week, the Countess told me, the post brought in as much, sometimes more—a remarkable proof, I thought, of the esteem in which the Count is held.

It was not until the following afternoon that the Count made his appearance. The morning I had spent with the young Countess and the Cossack maiden, visiting with them some of the 'free tables' which had been established. The appearance of those peasants who were being fed at these estimable institutions was so deplorable that it will be for ever graven on my mind. 'I would rather,' I said to myself, 'be a Red Indian than one of these mūzhiks, with their attenuated features, their flimsy clothes, and their wretched hovels.'

Towards midday I called on a neighbouring pomieshik (landlord). Only the lady of the house, however, was at home. She was in despair at the ruin of the peasantry and of the country gentry.

'All,' she lamented, 'that Catherine the Great did has now been undone, and by a false Liberalism. The peasants are far worse off now than they were before their emancipation. Catherine was a genius, although she had the "vices of her good qualities." She did much towards introducing European civilisation into the heart of the country, but now all her good work has been swept away. We are going backwards instead of forwards.'

When, at length, the Count arrived, I was glad to see that he looked hale and hearty. As usual, he wore a grey woollen blouse and top boots, and thrown over his shoulders was a plain sheepskin tūlūp.

In outward appearance the Count (according to M. S. A. Bers, the Count's brother-in-law) greatly resembles his grandfather, Prince Nicholai Andreevitch Volkonsky. Both possess an open

and high forehead with dense overshadowing eyebrows, from under which small and deep-set greyish-blue eyes pierce the stranger's soul. At times the eyes flash, giving the Count a wild look. One is inclined to exclaim on first seeing this remarkable man, 'What a simple, plain man! Surely he must have a mind easy enough to fathom.' The man who so thinks is greatly mistaken. The lakes of the north appear clear, tranquil, and shallow; but the man who ventures into them will soon find that they are fathoms deep. So with Tolstoi. When one ventures to investigate his mind, one soon gets out of one's depth.

And yet, although the Count's thought is so profound, the Count is none the less sociable. His is a simple and genial disposition, in thorough harmony with his simple exterior. Naturally kind, his great anxiety is to hurt no one's feelings.

The parents of Count Tolstoi lived principally in Yasnaia Poliana, where is to be found a genealogical tree which belonged to the grandfather before referred to. This is an oil painting on linen, in which the ancestor of the Prince Volkonsky, the Holy Méchail, Prince of Tchernigoff, is seen holding in his hands a tree, the branches of which contain the names of his ancestry.

Count Tolstoi's father, Count Nicholaivitch Tolstoi, served in the Paulograd Hussar regiment, and was taken a prisoner by the French in 1812. In Count Tolstoi's work 'War and Peace' he is described under the name of Count Nicholaivitch 'Rostoff,' and his capture by the French furnished the theme for the description of the imprisonment of Pierre Biezuchoff. 'There is not the least doubt,' says M. Bers, 'that under the names of Prince Nikolai Andreevitch Volkonsky and Count Andreevitch Rostoff the grandfathers of the Count are described.' A single glance at their portraits in the hall of Yasnaia Poliana will establish this. The Count lost his mother when he was only three years old. Nevertheless he has described her, in this novel, as he supposed her to be, in the Princess Maria Volkonsky.

The Count was most cordial in greeting me.

'What is your patronymic?' he inquired.

'Vassili Oscarovitch,' I replied, adding that I was of Norse or Scandinavian origin.

After referring to our previous meeting at Moscow, I spoke of the object of my visit, and I soon found that the Count had been under the impression that the condition of the Eastern provinces was not worse than that of the province of Riazan.

'Is it possible, Vassili Oscarovitch,' he queried, 'that you saw peasants of the Samara province dying of starvation? When I was a young man I used to go and sleep in houses which were said to be haunted; but I never saw a ghost. Nor have I, as yet, seen a man in this district die of hunger; and yet my friends in many villages of the province of Samara are dying of starvation! Such a spectacle I can hardly think possible in Russia. I cannot think that the Russian *müzhik* is so hard-hearted as not to help a dying comrade. Besides, every village boasts some wealthy peasants, and these would be ready to help their poor brethren, and to prevent such a state of things coming about.'

Count Tolstoi in making these sceptical remarks did not in the least surprise me. It is still to the majority of Russians an incomprehensible thing that in Russia, a country which supplies the greater part of Europe with grain, a single person should die of starvation. Such, however, is the case. There are, undoubtedly, while I am writing these pages, thousands of peasants in the provinces of Samara, Saratoff, Simbirsk, Penza, &c., who are dying, if not from absolute starvation, from diseases directly caused by insufficient nourishment and an injurious diet. Many are subsisting on *lebeda*, clay, weeds, on bread mixed with chopped straw, &c., and on weed soup, melon skins, &c.

I explained to the Count that it was quite to be expected that many should die of the effects of hunger when in one province alone there were several hundred thousand individuals who received no assistance whatever from the *Zemstvos*. And as for the wealthy peasants he spoke of, in several of the villages which I had visited, those individuals I had found to be themselves in need, having disposed of their animals and consumed their seed-corn. 'When a man eats nothing for months,' I continued, 'save bread, insufficient in quantity and bad in quality, and such injurious articles as clay and *lebeda*, and is then carried off by typhus or some other complaint directly traceable to this diet, I regard his death as being a death from hunger, although the doctors in this country apparently do not.'

The Count then began to speak of the trouble which had come to him through the article to the 'Telegraph' already alluded to. The 'Moscow Gazette' in putting before the Russian public a false interpretation of the drift of his arguments—in an article which was never intended for the Russian Press—had, he complained, grossly libelled him. Nowhere in that article had he,

as the 'Gazette' had insinuated, advised the peasants to revolt. He had recommended the peasants to co-operate, with the object of raising themselves morally from their present wretched condition; never once in his teachings had he advocated as the best means of obtaining one's rights the employment of force. Had he done so he would have had the whole revolutionary party on his side. He had, it was true, received shortly after the publication of the article in question letters from several discontented spirits, congratulating him on his coming round to their views, but had quickly dispelled the illusions of these persons.

A section of the Moscow Press, he bitterly complained, lost no opportunity of misrepresenting his ideas. Yet to their attacks he was not allowed to reply. So great had been the commotion created by this 'Daily Telegraph' article throughout the length and breadth of the land that the Censors had decided not to allow the subject to be kept open. A reply from him would, they said, cause an undesirable controversy to arise in the Press. *A propos* of this matter, the Count read aloud to me a letter which he had received from a friend in St. Petersburg. It stated that, although the Czar was very displeased with the Count's article, which he had termed *gadosta* (nastiness), he had given orders that Tolstoi was 'to be left alone.' This expression of the Imperial will was quite necessary, because, as I have already pointed out, many were clamouring that the aged writer should be sent to Siberia, or confined to his estates, or put in a madhouse.

This personal matter led the Count to speak about editors and their duties. An editor or a journalist ought, he considered, to be able to resist the temptations which his profession placed him in, and should, therefore, be a man of tremendous strength of character. 'Take for instance,' he said, 'the position of an editor who owns a newspaper which is on the verge of bankruptcy. He can only save his paper from extinction by getting up some great sensation, which will increase its circulation. Say at that very moment two countries have a quarrel about something, and war looms in the distance. There is an opportunity for that editor to make a fortune by stirring up the people or spreading sensational reports. In order to resist this temptation, a man placed in a position of this kind must indeed have great power over himself.'

In the course of conversations on the following morning the Count showed himself to be deeply interested in English and

American social questions; also in Ruskin and Matthew Arnold. Ruskin he thought one of the greatest men of the age, and it pained him to notice that English people generally were of a different opinion. 'But no man is a prophet in his own country; and the greatest men are seldom recognised in their own times, for the very reason that they are so much in advance of the age. Their contemporaries are unable to understand them.'

'When Ruskin,' continued the Count, 'began to write on philosophy and on morality he was ignored by everybody, especially by the English Press, which has a peculiar way of ignoring anybody it does not like. I am not astonished that people speak so little of Ruskin in comparison with Gladstone. When the latter makes a speech the papers are loud with their praises, but when Ruskin—whom I believe to be a greater man—talks, they say nothing.'

I confessed to the Count that I myself only knew Ruskin as the art critic. At this he seemed much put about. 'Then,' he replied, 'you don't know anything.' I pleaded that a journalist who had to keep pace with the political events of the day had little time left for studying philosophy. The Count agreed, but urged me all the same to join the Ruskin Society. 'To be a member,' he said, 'you must wear nothing that has not been made by hand, nor must you live on money which has been gained by usury. You must, in a word, live by your own labour, not on other people's. To many,' he added, 'these are not pleasant doctrines, few people like to be told that they are living on other people's labour.'

Evidently taking a great interest in my spiritual and bodily welfare, the Count next strongly urged me to become a vegetarian. Here I could tell him that when in London I frequently patronised the vegetarian restaurants, and I suggested that if he should ever go to London he should try those places of refreshment.

'Go to London!' he repeated with a sigh. 'I shall soon be going to the next world.'

In speaking of Socialism and the English Socialists, the Count spoke much about a Mr. Battersby, the son of an English general, who had been out to see him, and for whom he had conceived a great regard. This gentleman was, he said, a great friend of the workmen, acting during strikes as a kind of mediator between them and their masters. In trades unions he had no confidence.

They would, he was afraid, merely substitute in the course of time for the injustice of the minority that of the majority. All quarrels, he contended, ought to be settled on Christian grounds. But, alas! how little of Christianity there was in this nineteenth century of lies and humbug.

He was no believer in Bellamy's material progress. 'What progress is that,' he asked, 'which shows itself in smoking cigarettes and walking in silk attire? Are people the better off for that, physically, mentally, or spiritually?' A great weakness in 'Looking Backward,' he thought, was that it failed to show how the changes it foreshadowed were to be brought about. It was as if in the times of the Cæsars a certain Bellamy of Ancient Rome had written a book without foreseeing such great events as the advent of Christ or the destruction of the Empire by the Goths.

Nor did he believe that the Social Revolution could be brought about by force. People must change of their own free will.

Touching on religion, he asked, 'Why is it necessary for men to worship together? Cannot they worship alone, in secret? This church-going and these ceremonies, they are only forms of religion—not religion itself. Russian peasants will start and show the world a new religion, the religion of non-resistance. They will give the world an exhibition of patience. Already the Stundists are doing this. People can, if they choose, get on very well without priests.'

I remarked that I went myself to church occasionally, and that I rather enjoyed a good sermon. 'Cannot you worship as well at home?' he asked me in reply. 'What is the use of hearing a person tell you over and over again what you know already? People should spend less time in observing ceremonials, and more in doing—that is the main thing!'

Buddhism, he thought, was a very pessimistic religion. True Christianity, on the other hand, was beautiful and consoling. Personally, he did not think the present a bad life, if it were properly lived. We were not intended to be miserable, but happy. To him all natural objects were a never-failing source of delight, even the very snow and the icicles on the trees.

In this connection I may remark that Tolstoi was not always of this deeply religious turn of mind. It is only since about the year 1880 that he became a true, though unconventional Chris-

tian. In his younger days he thought a great deal of his personal appearance. He sported fashionable clothes, was fond of society, and was often to be seen at balls, theatres, &c. As we might expect, he then went to church 'like a Christian.' He introduced his eldest daughter into society, and was in every sense of the phrase a 'man of the world.'

That he does not now act in this way, but busies himself solely in looking after the poor and the sick, is a matter for complaint against him in conventional quarters. Good orthodox Christians cannot understand how he can be a Christian, when he neglects all the outward signs of Christianity and respectability. They altogether fail to see that their own Christianity is Respectability plus a little superstition, and nothing more.

Those who wish to know more about Tolstoi's present religious opinions should consult that remarkable book of his, 'Moi Eezpovied' ('My Religion'). It is said that when the Count completed this work he called all his family around him, and told them, to their dismay, that he was going to give all his property to the poor. The Countess, so the report goes, on hearing the Count announce this quixotic intention, swooned away. 'Sell what thou hast and give it to the poor,' was a precept which they had heard often, but to translate it into action was for them too hard a task. And so the Count left the house, telling his family that they could do what they liked with the money. As for himself, he had no further need of it. A simple blouse and plain food would suffice for him. The Count has adhered to his resolution. He does not, a friend tells me, own now so much as a kopëk. His estates, his horses, his money, everything he possessed have been made over to his wife and children.

My conversations with the Count were frequently interrupted by peasants coming in to ask for aid of some kind; and, once, one of his followers, a Moscow gentleman, entered the room. The Count requested the last-named to be good enough to reply to a Jewish student of the University, who had written begging the Count to allow him to come and assist him and to contribute pecuniarily to the good work.

'Tell him,' said the Count sadly, 'that he cannot come because of his nationality, although he would have been welcome.' Then suddenly turning to me, the Count said: 'Are you a Swedenborgian?'

'No,' I replied, 'but I am greatly interested in the ideas and

doctrines of Swedenborg, and regret that I have not found time to study them.'

'Well, I like the Swedenborgians,' replied the Count.

He then began to tell me how many people could or would not understand or put a false interpretation on his writings. I suggested that probably they were mentally incapable of understanding him. It required a certain development of the mind to grasp deep thoughts.

'No, that's not the reason,' rejoined the Count; 'they do not understand me because they do not wish to. Every person can understand those things which it is necessary for him to understand. One person may not be so quick in grasping a truth as another, but sooner or later it will dawn on him, and he will comprehend it.' The Count then spoke of the free tables (which are now 150 in number, feeding 8,000 daily), which he had been able to establish owing to the kind assistance of his friends in America, England, and Russia. He had also established special kitchens for little children, and what he called 'free tables' (two large stables) for his dumb friends the horses. These, to the number of 300, he collected from the different villages and fed together. Moreover, wood in large quantities had been bought and distributed.

'In all,' said the Count, 'over thirty million people have been affected by the famine; but there are some peasants who try to make their cases worse than they really are, thus making it very difficult to ascertain exactly how they stand.' I expressed my conviction that if the peasants could only be got out of their horribly backward state; if they had only as much information on agricultural matters as the yeomen of other countries, and knew how to work their rich land to the best advantage, they would soon be able to own good houses, stables, furniture, beds, and everything which makes life comfortable. 'But why,' queried the Count, 'should a man sleep on a bed if he can do without one by sleeping on the ground? You would increase their wants and make them luxurious. If a man is happy without a bed, why should he have one? Marcus Aurelius used to sleep on the ground. Why shouldn't the mūzhiks?'

The Count seemed indeed to look upon poverty as a virtue. It grieved him, however, to think of the drunkenness, ignorance, and unclean habits of the peasants.

Before taking my leave of the Count I told him that the

Countess Maria had not converted me from my heathenish opinions respecting the right to resist evil.

'There are so many men,' I argued, 'who are so cruel, greedy, and aggressive, that if we are not to resist them we cannot preserve our liberty and independence. To act in this manner is, I know, contrary to the teachings of the New Testament; but all our liberties, political and religious, have been so obtained. Even the Huguenots, Puritans, and the Covenanters were obliged to resort to force.'

'It is a great mistake,' replied the Count, 'to think that the heart of man is as bad as you believe it to be. There is good at the bottom of the worst men; and we should appeal to the good that is in a man's nature. Harrison and Bellew,' he added, 'are successfully preaching this doctrine in America; and the Stundists in this country are practically carrying it out.'

In support of his argument he mentioned an instance of some peasants, who, to test the sincerity of some Stundists, gradually robbed these of all their movable property. One day they took away the horses, another day the cows, a third day the furniture, until, finally, there was nothing left for them to take. Then they waited a day or two to see whether the Stundists would be false to their profession. Finding, eventually, that the Stundists did not move in the matter, and being conscience-stricken, they returned all the stolen property.

'But those peasants,' I exclaimed, 'had consciences. What about men who do not possess consciences? Take for example the Bashkirs and Tartars, and other wild tribes of Asia,' and I narrated how some of the Mennonite colonists of the province Saratoff, who, like the Stundists, believed in the doctrine of non-resistance to evil-doers, had at last been obliged to arm themselves while at work, as some of their evil-minded neighbours, taking advantage of their non-defensive attitude, had begun to plunder and kill them. To this Count Tolstoi replied, 'They do wrong to resist.'

This discussion led us on to another topic, 'War and Government,' the subject of the book on which the Count is now engaged. The Count showed me a book which he had just received from Germany, entitled 'Die Waffen nieder.' It was, he said, written against the practice of war, and was an excellent publication. Over a hundred soldiers in the German army (or Austrian army, I forget which) had, he told me, stated that their consciences would

not allow them to kill their fellow-men at the command of their Government. This circumstance was being kept secret by the authorities.

'War between nations,' said the Count, 'is ridiculous and illogical.'

'What, then,' I asked, 'would you have soldiers do when ordered to kill their brethren?'

'They should refuse to obey,' said the Count, who, I may remind my readers, has himself served in the army.

Returning to the subject of war, the Count said, 'Several of my friends have been imprisoned for years and others exiled to Siberia for refusing to become soldiers and to slay their fellow-men.' I replied that I certainly thought that men of talent and energy could be better employed than in covering the earth with gore and manufacturing widows and orphans; that their strength should rather be spent in reclaiming their country from barbarism, in developing the resources of the country, or in creating beautiful works of art. Only when the soldier was defending the homes and liberties of his fellow-countrymen was he acting nobly. A war of aggression was simply murder on a large scale. It ought to be, and I hoped soon would be, an impossibility with civilised and so-called 'Christian' nations.

In parting from Count Tolstoi, he gave utterance to the following remarkable and sad words: 'I do not know whether what I am doing is for the best, or whether I ought to tear myself away from this occupation. All I know is that I cannot leave this work. Perhaps it is weakness; perhaps it is my duty which keeps me here. But I cannot give it up, even if I should like to. Like Moses on Mount Horeb, I shall never see the fruit of my labours. I shall never know whether I have been acting for the best or not. My fear is that what I am doing is only a palliative.'

Surely, when the historian comes to cover the canvas of the latter half of the nineteenth century, he will find no more pathetic figure for his painting than that of the great genius Tolstoi, battling with famine and fever, and striving with all his might and main to bring about the universal brotherhood of mankind, and yet pursued by doubts as to whether, after all, there is not some better way which he does not see.

THE ALPINE ROOT-GRUBBER.

THE edelweiss (*Gnaphalium Leontopodium*) has been hunted from one point of refuge to another, among the Alps, till it has been almost exterminated in its native home. One of the most beautiful and quaint of the mountain flowers is condemned to extinction because tourists in Switzerland consider themselves bound by fashion to wear a couple of dried specimens in their hats, or send them home gummed to a card. In one or two of the cantons the Government has interfered to save the persecuted plant, and has set a fine on the plucking of its beautiful white fluffy flowers.

The edelweiss does not submit readily to cultivation in gardens. It will indeed grow when planted in a rockery, but it degenerates early, the flowers assuming a green hue in place of snowy white, and the petals losing their curious wool.

Another Alpine favourite is also subject to remorseless pursuit, but for quite another object. This is the large blue gentian, the gentianella (*Gentiana acaulis*), and it is becoming year by year less common, and it is even feared lest it also should have to be placed under the protection of the law to save it, like the Edelweiss, from being blotted out of the book of existing Alpine flowers. There is, however, this comfort in thinking of the cruel and unremittent pursuit to which the gentianella is subjected, that it, unlike the edelweiss, lives happily and shows its full beauty of colour in the garden border. And yet what would an Alpine pasture be without its gentians? Lovely it always will be, but of a loveliness without its perfection. The gentianella is the very crown of its beauty, as the alpenrose is the crown of beauty to an Alpine crag. Happily the little blue gentian—the Cup of Heaven, as the Tyrolese call it—is not menaced like its larger and deeper-coloured sister. But is it not precisely the fact that the slope spangled with the azure *Gentiana bavarica* has that blue gathered into dark intenser points wherever a great bell of the *Gentiana acaulis* opens, the very thing that accentuates, sublimates into perfection the whole vision of floral beauty?

There is a class of men and women who make it their profession to pursue and root up the gentianella, and this class exists

throughout the whole chain of the Alps, in Tyrol, the Bavarian Alps, and in Switzerland. This is the Enzianklauber. These Gentian hunters are weatherbeaten, wiry individuals. The writer made the acquaintance of a pair, man and wife, and employed them to collect roots and bulbs for him. As soon as the snows melted in spring, and the doomed gentians showed their long pointed bells above the swath, before they had opened and disclosed their depths of purple-blue, this pair locked their house in the valley and went up the mountains, not to return to their home till driven down by the snows of autumn.

‘I shall write to you in spring,’ said I, ‘and give you a list of what I want.’

‘In spring!’ was the answer. ‘Then we shall not get the letter till the approach of winter. For, see you, we shall be up—very high, and we go wherever there are gentians, arnica, puff-balls. No one can say where we shall be. We do not know ourselves. No letter can reach us till Michaelmas. Our Whitsuntide we shall spend nearer heaven than those in churches.’ My friends were peculiarly happy; they had a good house of their own in the valley, and they went together into the heights: consequently, they were companions to each other all the year.

Usually the root-grubber is a man who has failed in other trades; perhaps an old soldier, or a day labourer who yearns for independence. Never a young man, generally one with grey in his hair.

When the mountain streams begin to swell and foam, he becomes restless, looks at the snowy heights, marks the return of the swallows, notes what flowers are opening in the meadows by the river. Then, one fine day he dons his leather breeches, and thick woollen stockings, puts on his heavy shoes with iron cramps in the soles, takes his spud and pick—comes into the kitchen, claps his old woman on the back, and says, ‘So! the time is come. You will not see my brown face again till the first snows, and then it will be ten times browner—like your coffee berries. Now, old wife, you know what I want up in the height.’

She nods. She has it ready—a supply of flour, salt, bread, and a bottle of holy water. He would go without bread rather than without this latter.

And thereby hangs a tale.

One night a root-grubber prepared his supper after a hard

day's work, in his lonesome post in the high Alps. He had some potatoes, and he resolved on a good plate of potato salad. He had with him a flask of crab-apple vinegar. So he sliced the potatoes and drenched them from the bottle, then began to eat. After the first mouthful he remained perplexed, shook his head, and poured some more from the flask over the potatoes.

The result was not more satisfactory than before. He finished his meal without relish, and then prepared himself for rest. He recited his rosary, then splashed some holy water over himself to make him secure against all spirits of evil, when—with a cry he began to rub his eyes. The holy water was wondrous sharp, and made them smart. Alas! he had put holy water with his potatoes, and had sprinkled himself with vinegar.

The root-grubber is careful to provide himself with something beside pick and spud—and that is a rifle, for when in the mountains he relies for his food to some extent on the chamois he can kill.

He builds himself a little hut high up of interwoven branches of pine, roofed with bark held down by stones. Here he kindles his fire, cooks his food, and sleeps. The hovel is destitute of every convenience, is pervious to wind and rain, and is not calculated to endure beyond the summer. But the situation is magnificent. The richest verdure clothes the slope on which it is planted, and the snowy peaks and glittering glaciers surround it. The air is musical with the bells of the pasturing cattle.

He cares little enough, apparently, for the beauties of nature—his object in life is to find roots, especially those of the gentianella, that which is dark blue and the rarer yellow gentian. Formerly, when the *Gentiana acaulis* starred every greensward, his labours were not arduous nor perilous. But as the Alps have been rifled, the flowers have to be sought on spots hitherto unexplored, and for this purpose the man must tread where hardly a goat can find foothold.

If the root-grubber, instead of risking his life and undergoing severe hardships in search of wild plants, would cultivate them in his garden in the valley, he would be saved this trouble and the risk. But this never occurs to him, and it is possible that the risk and exposure constitute one of the charms of his profession. Though he may not be able to give an account of his feelings, yet dimly but very really he does enjoy the marvellous scenery of the high Alps, amongst which his life for half the year is spent.

He starts for his work with the first grey light of dawn. He clambers precipices to the ledges where lies a blue band of flowers, like an azure belt girdling the mountain; or, if he cannot ascend, he lets himself down to their place of refuge by a rope fastened to a pine above. When the sun is hot, and he feels hunger, he throws himself by a spring and draws from his wallet a hunch of black bread and another of goat's-milk cheese. After a brief rest, he is at work again. He wanders to long distances from his hut, and does not trouble to return to it at night, especially if the weather be favourable. He finds shelter under a rock, and sleeps upon moss. Next morning he takes all the roots he has collected together, and spreads them on a rock where they may dry in the sun. He wanders on, and again sleeps at a distance from his hut, and again makes a little store, which he leaves at his lodging for the night. Very generally, each root-grubber has several of these store places, and to these he carries his collections every day, each day to the nearest store. By this means the man wanders over great distances, and days, weeks may pass without his reappearance at his hut. There is only this to recall him to it, that there is his supply of food, and to it, therefore, he must go back when what he has taken with him is exhausted. But he obtains fresh milk often enough, and sometimes bread and cheese as well, at the senn-huts where the girls are watching the cattle on the high Alps, and making the cheeses. If the man can play the zither, sing a song, or tell a tale, he is heartily welcome, and a bed in the hayloft is never denied him.

But it is exceptional for the digger of roots to visit the senn-houses; he leads for the most part an utterly lonely life, keeping away from the haunts of man, for where man is there the mountain side has been gone over again and again in search of the precious roots. He collects herbs as well as roots, and the resin from the pines as well as both. Especially choice is that resin which is found in amber-like balls or masses in the great ant-hills in the woods. He turns over these heaps in quest of the resin.

The man does not lose his tongue through the solitary life—he talks to everything, to the marmot he sees by the snowfield and hears whistling, to the plant he is picking, and the root he is digging out of the ground.

He is full of superstition. Away from men, from church, from the tavern and newspapers, he is driven in on himself, on his phantasies; and the old stories of spirits and dwarfs,

of elves and demons he heard as a child, rise up in his mind, fill it, and become to him living verities. The spiritual world is to him full of terrors, but not so the world of nature. He is a fatalist. Unless he be doomed to be struck, the lightning plays around him innocuously. He goes fearlessly along the face of a precipice. If he is fated to fall, fall he must. Otherwise he will creep along upheld marvellously.

Thus passes the summer. The days begin to contract; the herbs, one after another, have shed their blossoms. No longer do the cattle bells chime on the Alpine pastures, nor do the rocks ring with the jodel of the cowherd. The mountain peaks stand out more sharply than in summer. The songbirds have ceased to make melody; only now and again are the cries of the hawk and the stone-eagle to be heard. Then, at length, come cloud and rain, and lastly snow.

The time for return is come.

The root-grubber goes round to his various stores and collects all together in his little hut, and finally transports the whole of his six months' collection to the valley.

And for what, it may be asked, has he gathered such quantities of gentian root?

The purpose of collecting the arnica and some other roots used in medicine is plain enough. But why so much gentian? Partly because it gives a better tonic, chiefly because out of these roots is distilled the favourite gentian brandy. The manufacture of this now begins. The roots that have been collected are first subjected to thorough drying, and then are chopped small with knives shaped like sabres. Then the whole mass is put into vats to ferment. These vats are closed vessels about six feet high. When the fermentation has continued sufficiently, the mass is put into retorts and subjected to the fire. What is first given off is 'futter;' it looks like buttermilk, and contains little or no alcohol. This is again subjected to the fire, and the brandy that is so valued in the Alps flows from it.

The gentian spirit may be said to be the very elixir of life to the mountain folk. A glass of *enzeler*, half drunk and half rubbed on the afflicted member, will cure rheumatism. There is no lozenge or emollient mixture ever made that is so good for a cough and sore lungs as gentian brandy. There is not a stimulant in exhaustion so efficacious as this same spirit. But then it must be taken with the implicit faith in its efficacy that is

possessed by the Alpine peasant. He takes a nip of it in the morning to brace him for his day's work, and a nip at night to recover his exhausted sinews. He takes it with his meals to assist in the digestion. He takes it when he has nothing to eat, that it may serve as food to him, meat as well as drink. He takes a nip to stir him up to make the first advances to his beloved, and a nip to raise his felicity to its acutest pitch when she has consented to be his. A glass of *enzeler* welcomes the advent of a child into the world, and consoles the mourners in their bereavement.

The smell of gentian brandy is not pleasant, especially if new, but with age the spirit greatly improves, mellows, and loses its disagreeable aroma. Of all the kinds of gentian that are used for the manufacture of the spirit, the yellow gentian (*Gentiana lutea*) is the king. This gentian grows in moist thin soil, and high up on the Alps. It reaches three or five feet in height, with great strong stems, and the flowers, which are yellow, are produced in dense whorls in the upper part of the stem. The roots are far larger than those of the *Gentiana acaulis*. It has been so sought after that it is now becoming a rare plant. Next to the yellow gentian comes that with the large dark blue bell; that which is called *acaulis*. The Germans call it thousand-gulden herb. Akin to this is the pannonian gentian, with its deep purple flowers and dark spots. Then the spotted gentian (*punctata*) and that which is without these blotches (*concolor*). The *punctata* is pale yellow, and grows about two feet high; the spots are purple.

Formerly, when the gentians grew common as do daisies on our meadows, upon every Alpine pasture, the root-digger was able to realise a good income, but it is otherwise now. These beautiful mountain flowers have been so persecuted, so driven from one vantage ground to another, that they are becoming annually more scarce, more difficult to find, and consequently the business has become more unremunerative whilst becoming more hazardous. But this is the fault of the men themselves. If they would but leave the lower portion of the root in the ground, the plant would recover and grow again. To such a pass has it come, that Alps which were at one time blue with gentians are now entirely cleared of them.

Sometimes the owners of the Alpine pastures refuse to allow the grubbers to invade them. They dig up the roots themselves and sell them to these men, who are then merely the middle men through whose hands the gentian roots pass to the distillers.

One whole district—the mountains near Hall in the Inn valley—has been denuded of gentians by an unhappy experiment. Some years ago the directors of the salt works spent a large sum of money in the purchase of all the gentian roots that could be got. The mountaineers, stimulated by the prospect of a ready market, swept their pastures clear of gentians. The object of the directors was to mix the pounded roots with the coarse salt intended for cattle, and make it unserviceable for table use. But they had miscalculated. The cattle refused to eat the salt made bitter with gentian, and many hundreds of tons had to be thrown into the Inn. It killed the fish; but that was the least of the evils. The Alps had been devastated, and a whole industry destroyed. Those who previously had collected and distilled gentian roots, had to seek employment elsewhere and in some other direction.

‘Poor as a root-grubber’ is now the saying.

Occasionally one of these men returns to his village during the summer, but then it is never alone, nor does he return voluntarily. He has his hands bound, and is made to walk between a couple of foresters. He is taken off to the prison cell. He has been chasing something other than gentians. Occasionally also another returns, a broken and lifeless mass, and is carried, to the tolling of the church bell, amidst the wailing of his widow, to a darker cell still—that of the grave. The gentian has revenged itself on its destroyer.

AN ARTIST OF THE PAVEMENT.

WE are apt to believe that any crisis in our lives is led up to, as in books and plays, and announces itself as such to ourselves and others. As a matter of fact, the events which affect us most generally happen quietly, when we are engaged on our daily work, and thinking least about them. So, at any rate, it was with Charlie Sprigget. There was nothing to mark this day from any other day: he rose at his usual time, had his breakfast of bread and (what a man without a conscience sold for) butter, took his chalks in his hat and set out for his studio. Charlie Sprigget's studio was large and airy, and, except on foggy days, well lighted, and he paid no rent for it. He had tried two or three, all very similar, but he had never been so well satisfied with any as with his latest. It was in a not too fashionable neighbourhood, and there was a blank wall behind it against which he could lean his back when he was tired of work, there was plenty of traffic, and the paving-stones were nice and square, and, having been recently laid down, were quite smooth—a great advantage. Charlie was particular about these details, for he was an artist at heart, and to the true artist the means are never insignificant, being sanctified by the end to which they help him to attain.

Mr. Sprigget set to work with a very good heart. The tardy spring seemed to have come, for at last there was a fine day, the nipping east wind was temporarily lulled, and there was that subtle fragrance in the air which penetrates to the brain and rouses even in the least imaginative something visionary, hopeful, poetic. Charlie, as it were, instinctively selected his light colours, especially from the greens and blues, and kneeling on the pavement, which served him also as easel and canvas, gave scope to the creative faculty which is to the artist his tyrant and his slave. Charlie, if he belonged to any special school, might be claimed by the Impressionists; he had an idea to convey, and he did so in a method satisfactory to his own mind, it being a matter of indifference to him if the result were unintelligible to others. A few strokes and some judicious rubbing with the forefinger of his right hand, and, lo, something resembling several skeins of green wool hopelessly entangled! But Charlie saw, as it were, a

grove of trees in full foliage, and the birds were singing in the branches, and the leaves were lifted by the breeze, and the ground beneath was flecked with sunlight and with shadow; then a liberal band of blue, rubbed with the coat-sleeve to smoothness and equality, a few touches of white, and in the middle a fowl well nigh as large as the largest tree, with wings outspread and open beak; and Charlie had represented the great o'erleaning sky, with the lightest of fleecy clouds, and the lark which had soared above the earth, giving forth a flood of rapture such as never poet knew.

If others did not see all Charlie meant, he thought, as we all think, when men are blind to our intentions, that their sight was darkened.

So he drew for an hour, and when he had produced five pictures his soul was eased, and he was content, and ready to sit with his back against the wall and the soles of his ragged boots exposed; but first he drew a circle in yellow chalk and printed in irregular letters:

‘GIV AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO YOU.’

He generally put a copybook maxim or a quotation from Scripture, occasionally incorrect, for the passengers’ spiritual, and his own pecuniary, benefit.

His labours had not been unnoticed. Many of the passers-by stopped a little while to watch him, but in a merely desultory manner, and no one thought of paying for this private view; indeed, Charlie’s profession was not particularly remunerative. But then his expenses were light, and many of his chinks had been given him by a brother artist who had discovered he was unsuited to a sedentary life, and had therefore gone for a sandwich man. But scarcely had Mr. Sprigget settled himself, with special care as to the greater prominence of the right leg, the trouser of which seemed designed as a patent ventilator, when a hot half-penny was slipped into his hand, and looking up he met a pair of grey, long-lashed, friendly eyes, which seemed to send a thrill to his very heart.

The owner of the eyes was a girl of about seventeen, with a freckled honest face, such a beautiful mouth that it would have been a pity had there been less of it, as the hypercritical might have desired, and a quantity of brown untidy hair, which the apology for a bonnet scarcely served to hide. She was very poorly dressed in a brown linsey gown, plentifully garnished with many-

coloured patches, and across her shoulders was thrown a fragment of a Paisley shawl. Very few people off the stage look picturesque in such common attire, but Belinda might have been coveted as a model by a greater artist than Charlie Sprigget.

'Oh, I say now,' said Charlie, turning over the halfpenny uneasily, 'ain't you a robbin' of yerself, miss?'

'Not at all,' replied Belinda with dignity. 'Seems to me that them as looks ought to pay, and I'm uncommon fond of picturs, I am.'

'Are you now?' said Charlie. Then, forgetting his elaborate preparation for arousing the public pity, he sprang up. 'P'raps you'd let me show you round the gallery, miss. I ain't got no caterlogue, yer see.'

There was nothing in Mr. Sprigget's manner to which to take exception, and Belinda, who knew no law of etiquette but that which was dictated by the kindness of her nature, fell in willingly with his suggestion. They accordingly stood together smiling, he at his own small joke and because Belinda was smiling, she because she was happy and the sun shone.

'This here,' said Mr. Sprigget, with a wave of his right arm, 'is a scene reppresenting the country; that there with the horns is a deer browsin' on the grass, and that other is a bull anigh the fence; and them black things in the hair is birds flyin', and them sort o' stars on the grass is daisies.'

'I ain't never been in the country,' said Belinda; 'but it do seem as nat'ral as life.'

Mr. Sprigget, who was perhaps not a little conceited, nodded approval of this criticism.

'I've bin there, trampin',' he said. 'I like it for a bit—it's all sort o' peaceful, and you feels like as if things was easier than they is, and there's thoughts comes to you, pure-like.'

'I'd like to go there,' said Belinda. 'And what's this one?'

'Why that's a country scene, too, that is. Not quite so much life in it as t'other one. That's like a forest or something, all trees close together, a bit like Kensington Gardings—I reckon you've bin there?'

'Maybe. I don't recollect. I ain't never bin out o' London as I knows on. But I may have been taken when I was little.'

Charlie was amazed at her ignorance, and yet it did not misbecome her.

'Kensington is *in* London,' he said; 'but London's a big

place, and it ain't to be expected you'd know it all. Wull, and there, you see, above the forest is a bird asingin'. Oh, they *do* sing in the country somethin' like. A penny whistle ain't in it.'

'And who's that gentleman?' inquired Belinda, indicating a study in black and white of a being with legs far apart, both arms extended, and a neck made specially long to accommodate a vast collar.

'That's pollytical,' said Charlie.

'Who?'

'Mr. Gladstone—him as cuts trees with axes, and makes the speeches in Parliament and all.'

'Yes, I think I've heerd his name. There's a boy in our court sings comic songs wonderful, and I think that name come in one. Do you think it'd be the same party?'

'I dessay. That head's wonderful like. I've seen picturs of him. The body and leg part I guessed at. They don't signify. One body and legs is uncommon like another. And now these two is sea-pieces. That's a calm with a ship on it, and t'other's a storm.'

'Where's the ship off that one?'

'Gone down, don't yer see? There's a bit of mast stickin' up.' Belinda looked serious.

'I'm sorry you put that in,' she said. 'The others is so peaceful. Have you seen the sea too?'

'Well, I ain't exactly *seen* it, so to speak; but there, what's the use of bein' an artist if you can't imagine a bit? Besides, I've seen coloured things in shops and all.'

'Seems to me you must be very clever.'

Mr. Sprigget assumed a modest demeanour. 'Not so very,' he said. 'It's my profeshun, you see.'

There was a minute's silence.

'Are you here most days?' asked Belinda, then.

'Yes, I've took up quarters here.'

'P'r'aps I'll see yer again. I often comes past.'

'Do yer now?'

It was not much to say, but the tone betrayed interest. Once more their eyes met. They were both very young, for Mr. Sprigget had not yet attained his twentieth year; they were both the children of nature, and already there existed between them that intuitive sympathy which is the foundation of the deepest sentiment; and the sense of the spring was about them; and that

humanity which in the uncultured poor is as real as, more real than, in those capable of analytical introspection, asserted itself unresisted.

‘Do yer now?’ said Charlie Sprigget again, but this time he lingered on the words. ‘I tell you what,’ he added with a burst of gallantry, ‘I shall draw something special for yer every day in the hopes of you comin’ by. But,’ fumbling in his trouser pocket, ‘I’d rather you see the show gratis free, yer know.’

She nodded her thanks, smiled again, showing the whitest of teeth, and walked rapidly away.

Mr. Sprigget went back to his seat against the wall, but now he was reckless as to which trouser was most evident. He felt very contented, very peaceful, with that peculiar consciousness of *completion* which is only vouchsafed to those who meet their twin soul. A quarter of an hour ago he was master of himself, but now he was in love. He was quite sure that he had been in love directly Belinda’s eyes had looked at him for the first time.

That was the beginning of a romance which glorified his life; and his art became to him more sacred than before because it had been the means of drawing Belinda to him. Not that he gave her at once to understand the nature of his feelings; Charlie had had some acquaintance with the sex already, and he knew the deceitfulness of mere externals; only he found himself constantly thinking of Belinda, and when he set about his daily work it was always with the notion of doing that which should be pleasing in her sight. Never more than two or three days elapsed before she chanced to pass by, and she invariably stopped and had a conversation with him, and as this conversation was all about himself and his pictures, it is no wonder he found her more and more charming. At last one day he drew ‘something special’ for her of a different nature from any subject he had hitherto attempted. It was like the ace of hearts (red), and it was dissected transversely by what was apparently a herring-bone, but which represented the weapon of Cupid. When this artistic production was completed he sat and watched it with sentimental satisfaction, but, as ill luck would have it, no Belinda passed that morning, and the afternoon dragged by reason of her absence. That night it rained, and the heart looked unpleasant the next day. Charlie erased it altogether with the piece of rag with which he usually undid his handiwork of an evening; but he had, contrary to his usual custom, left the symbol from a superstitious aversion to destroy

it. He took a studio a few feet farther up the street and drew another ace, fatter than the last and pierced by a larger and fiercer herring-bone.

He was still engaged in touching it up when a voice, *the voice*, quite close to him, inquired :

‘And what might you be drawin’ this morning?’

Mr. Sprigget assumed the perpendicular with promptitude and held out his hand. He blushed a little at the contact with hers, and perhaps because of the explanation which was required of him. Things in anticipation ideal seem in consummation foolish.

‘Lor,’ said Belinda, looking down at the pavement, ‘it’s like a valentine. Is that a heart, Mr. Sprigget?’

Introductions had taken place at the second interview.

‘A heart it is,’ said Charlie, whose own organ was beating with violence at the present moment. ‘And whose do you think, now?’

Belinda shook her head, but she, too, became conscious of the existence of her own organ of circulation, which seemed to be mounting towards her throat.

‘*Mine!*’ said Charlie quaveringly, as she did not come to his assistance, ‘and,’ he added, seeing from her rosy half-averted face that she was not as far from understanding him as her silence might have suggested, ‘you it is as have pierced it. Belinda, I loves you.’

Belinda might have taken exception to being portrayed as a fish-bone; but perhaps she gave Mr. Sprigget credit for being slightly confused by reason of his emotions. At any rate she manifested no displeasure, but being a practical little person laid her hand on his arm and said :

‘And I don’t dislike you neither, Charlie.’ Thus they became engaged.

Belinda took the somewhat hard seat to which he pointed.

Mr. Sprigget rapidly did two or three designs with an unsteady hand, drew his inevitable circle, and after an instant’s thought wrote therein :

‘LUV ONE ANNOTHER’

and

‘IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIV THAN TO RESEEV.’

Then he felt that he had earned the right to join his lady-love, who had been watching his operations with approving eyes.

The harmony of the morning was unbroken. They spoke little, but each was happy in the presence of the other, and

different people have different ways of making love. Licence in this as in other things must be given to the play of human nature. Towards twelve o'clock, however, Belinda rose.

'I must be goin',' she said.

'Have you got anything to do special?' inquired Mr. Sprigget.

The gentleman had always talked so much about himself that he had found out very little about Belinda.

'Didn't yer know?' said the girl. 'Why, now I comes to think of it, I ain't never mentioned it. I has a barrow.'

'Do yer? I hadn't a notion you did anythink like that.'

'Yes, me and another girl.'

'What do yer sell?'

'Guess.'

'Why, there ain't anything 'ld suit you but flowers,' said the artist.

Belinda shook her head.

'Hokey-pokey, p'raps.'

'No. Guess again.'

'I don't seem to fancy you sellin' anything else, Belinda, 'ceptin' p'raps oranges, or nuts maybe.'

'Wrong again.'

'What is it, then?'

'Whelks!' said Belinda.

If Mr. Sprigget had been the President of the Royal Academy himself no greater blow could have been dealt him. He was an idealist, and he despised the practical side of life. To him whelks lacked any element of romance. It somehow hurt him to think that his Belinda, his goddess, his inspiration, should be a vendor of whelks, and satisfied with—apparently proud of—her association with that homely shell-fish. Mr. Sprigget unfortunately had notions above his station.

'Belinda,' he said, with a grave, even sorrowful, expression, 'it don't seem sootable.'

'What don't?'

'Whelks. I could ha' swallow'd a good deal, but it don't seem as if I could swaller whelks.'

His manner annoyed Belinda.

'You ain't asked to,' she replied promptly.

'If only it was flowers, now, there's a poetry about flowers.'

'I don't see anything against whelks,' said Belinda stoutly. 'They're wholesome and tasty. There ain't the risk about 'em

there is with flowers neither, and they're uncommon popular with men,' and the vendor of the despised article of consumption tossed her head. She resented these airs on the part of Mr. Sprigget, for she had a spirit of her own.

'Oh, no doubt,' said Mr. Sprigget, 'but they wouldn't be perfeshunal men—not artists nor that. Belinda, you said you loved me. It ain't much to ask yer to please me.'

'Of course I'd please you if there was any sense in it, but there ain't no sense,' said Belinda, beginning to get angry. (More educated lovers have quarrelled about a matter quite as small, especially when, as now, the question at issue is less the original cause of dissension than which shall give in and which have his own way.) 'If I earns my livin' honest, it don't seem to matter whether it's flowers or fishes; and if a thing pays, what's the use of chuckin' it? Wheelks has stuck to me, and done well by me, and it's only nateral as I should do the same by wheelks.'

'Oh, very well,' said Mr. Sprigget with dignity. 'It don't matter—only evidently you don't care for *my* opinions, though it did seem as if we was a-goin' to get on well, you and me. But women is all alike—obstinit.'

During the first part of this speech Belinda had given signs of relenting, for, as a matter of fact, she was desirous of pleasing Mr. Sprigget, although his ideas of respectability were not comprehensible to her; but the concluding sentence hardened her heart. 'Yes,' she exclaimed, 'we *are* obstinit, and it's just as well when men are so foolish.' (Belinda had a temper, as what woman has not who is worth her salt?) 'And if I ain't grand enough for you, it's a pity you didn't find it out sooner. Which, evidently, we've been making a mistake. Good morning.'

And, gathering her shawl about her, the lady walked away with great dignity to burst into tears directly she was out of sight. Mr. Sprigget was thunderstruck. Little had he foreseen to what his words would lead. His first impulse was to follow her, but that pride which will rather have us suffer untold pangs than admit ourselves to be in the wrong held him back. Very low he grew, however, and very dispirited, as the afternoon wore on. Yet he hoped that Belinda would relent and come back to-morrow and make it up. He would rather she should take the first step towards reconciliation, though he was ready to meet her more than halfway. How dreary he felt, and but a short time back he had been so happy. He recalled the sunburnt, childish

face, the frank eyes which met his so fearlessly, and the mouth which smiled more bewitchingly than any mouth he had ever seen. And then what a thrill went through him when by accident her hand met his, or her hair, as she bent towards him, was blown by the wind against his cheek! He loved her! And surely such a little thing as this was not going to separate them. Why, it was only his exalted conception of her that made him desirous of connecting with her merely the loveliest things. (He was not the first impractical poet.) And it was very unkind of her to misunderstand him, and, above all, to go off in that manner, when she had said—and how sweetly, too!—so few hours back, ‘And I don’t dislike you neither, Charlie.’

At the recollection of this he nearly knocked his head against the wall. As a vent to his feelings, he seized his chalks and set to work to put his sorrow into his art. Quite different were the pictures he now drew from the airy productions of the morning. He depicted an earthquake as his imagination dictated, then a battlefield, and the ground was strewn with dead and dying. Fame comes to the broken-hearted; genius is the child of despair. So, in his little way, Charlie Sprigget, the pavement-artist, learnt that afternoon. Never had he earned so much, nor attracted so much attention; but oh! his heart was very heavy as, leaving his masterpieces in the hope that Belinda would see them in the morning, he wended his way homeward. But that night it rained again, so that the battlefiel’d and the earthquake and the dead and dying were all washed away, or so blurred as to be indistinct and unrecognisable, and all the next day it rained and the day after that; so that, but for his unusual harvest, it would have gone badly with Charlie, who had no balance in hand, and whose appetite was apt to be unpleasantly self-assertive.

But the third day it cleared, and he went to his studio, and once more hope reigned in his heart. The morning passed and no Belinda came along, and in the afternoon he knew, or guessed, she would be engaged. He could not work, for though excitement is a stimulus, dreariness is the very reverse. No man yet produced a masterpiece through depression, though he might through despair. So poor Sprigget only scratched aimlessly on the pavement with his dullest grey chalk, and cursed the day he was born.

That afternoon, however, he did see his lady-love, though not in the manner he had expected. Miss Belinda was quite as

anxious to look upon his face as he to look upon hers, and fully as repentant, though not quite as wretched, as himself; but she was also desirous of proving to him that she was not going to be trampled on and that she was a person of spirit. Accordingly, she had persuaded her 'pal'—a young woman several years her senior, and who was in reality the head and manager of the firm—to try a fresh locality for their barrow. And now she walked triumphantly behind it and helped to pitch it exactly opposite Mr. Sprigget's studio. Charlie was thunderstruck when he beheld her and realised the significance of the action. There she was, distractingly pretty, arranging the tiny platefuls of wheelks, quantities of which fish, garnished with parsley, were heaped on the barrow. She cast a look upon Mr. Sprigget, but took no further notice of him, and, when his eyes met hers, turned and addressed a laughing remark to her partner. Her audacity and her fascination—above all, her apparent indifference to himself—reduced the onlooker to a state of utter misery. He knew not what to do; go he dared not, stay he must—she should not have the satisfaction of putting him to flight. But what he suffered! And worse followed. For the wheelks were largely patronised, and, as Belinda had said, they were 'oncommon popilar with men;' and now several people stopped, and Belinda it was who handed them the little plates, and shook on the pepper, and suggested what would be a desirable quantity of vinegar, and supplied them with the bread and butter which she had cut with her own hands. And how she laughed too, and made little jokes! Whenever he saw her white teeth gleaming, he gnashed his own in impotent wrath and jealousy, poor Sprigget; for he had not the satisfaction of knowing what a heavy heart that bright-faced Belinda had in her bosom. Where a man sulks a woman laughs. He went away at last, unable to bear it any longer. And, perhaps, not the least bitter drop in his cup was this, that while he had earned not one penny by his art, she of the despised trade had accumulated quite a little pile of coppers.

The next day she came again, and every day that week, and still it was his fate to sit and watch her, and love her ever more deeply, and never have so much satisfaction as to touch her hand nor hear her voice except when she addressed another; and he would speculate how far otherwise it might have been by now but for his presumption; for it would have been his privilege to kiss her, and to tell her all his thoughts, and claim her sympathy as a

right. Oh! he was doubly lonely by contrast with what might have been.

And he earned very, very little that week—less than he had ever done since he had taken to the profession—so that when he encountered by chance his old friend and the latter told him of a sandwich man who had died that day and advised him to apply for the boards at once, he accepted the suggestion as a wise one, and driven by that stern master, hunger, spent three hours parading up and down the streets between two advertisements of a sale of boots.

He had time for meditation, and perhaps his occupation tended to foster the humility which Mr. Sprigget lacked. He resolved that as adversity had come to him and prosperity to Belinda he must give up all thoughts of her, and that it was no less than his duty to tell her so and to apologise for having presumed to dictate to her. Yes, he saw now that though it might be very well to have high-flown notions yet people must live, and those were wise who did that which remunerated them, provided it were only honest. After all he was now little better than a beggar, and there could be no work too menial for one who might otherwise have to face starvation. Providence, he thought, had deserted him to teach him a lesson; at any rate, his good luck (which was to Charlie a synonymous term) had done so; and the lesson being learnt he thought it probable that if he profited by the teaching fortune would favour him again.

Thus thinking he noticed little where they were going, but just followed the man in front of him, his own eyes cast down upon the pavement. Suddenly the blood leapt to his face. He saw upon the ground the faint mark of his work, and he knew where he was. He looked up. There was the stall! And Belinda stood behind it. Attracted by the row of sandwich men she watched them as they passed, and so it came about that poor shamed Charlie met her gaze. Her eyes fell. And he did not therefore note the surprise and the pity which were in them. He felt that now indeed all was over with him. A sudden thought came to him. He dropped out of rank, and drawing from his pocket a piece of chalk stooped and wrote in the usual printed characters which were the only ones he or Belinda could read with ease:

‘PRIDE MUST HAVE A FORL. WELKS ARE GOOD.’

And he underlined ‘FORL.’

When he had done this he rejoined the others, but without glancing any more at Belinda.

'I must see what that man has written,' said she to her companion in as casual a tone as she could assume, and she ran round and looked, spelling it out carefully. Then her eyes filled with tears, and her heart went out to Charlie, the more that there flashed across her the idea, which had never occurred to him, that some of the pennies which might have gone to Sprigget had found their way to her little till.

But Charlie had not completed his humiliation. He was too much of an artist not to do the thing thoroughly. And, besides, he was desirous of seeing what effect his words had had upon her. Accordingly the next day he walked down to the old haunt and presented himself at the stall. His face was very red as he pushed a penny towards the other woman (he dared not look at Belinda) and asked for a plate of whelks. If this was comic, there was not wanting an element of pathos. The little plate was given him, and Belinda handed him some bread and butter. He could not help looking at her, and she was smiling at him so kindly and yet so wistfully that his heart bounded.

'Mr. Sprigget,' said Belinda in a low voice. 'I am afraid we've interfered with your work, ain't we?'

'Nothing to mention,' said Charlie gruffly.

'We are thinkin' of goin' somewheres else,' said Belinda. 'Ain't we, Nance?'

'Well, you spoke of it,' said the other. 'I finds this a very payin' place.'

'Have you got your chalks about you?' asked Belinda then. 'Cos if so, I wish you'd draw somethin'.'

'What sort of a thing?' asked Mr. Sprigget, beginning to be mollified. 'Something special?'

'Yes. Something—special,' repeated Belinda.

Then she slipped round the stall.

'Oh, Mr. Sprigget—Charlie,' she said softly. 'Won't you draw the heart again? You know, what you did the day—you told me something—before we quarrelled. Oh, I ain't never been happy since. I'll give up'—she pointed to the barrow—'whelks and all if you'll only make it up.'

'No, Belinda,' said Mr. Sprigget. 'Stick to 'em. Maybe I've been mistaken. It's prejudice, that's what it is, Belinda. It seems a payin' trade enough—shouldn't wonder if I 'ad some-

thing o' the sort myself later on. Art's precarious, Belinda, in wet weather. And as to makin' it up——' Something rose in Mr. Sprigget's throat and he turned away, for the revulsion of feeling was too much for him.

He set to work then and there to do the heart. He had barely completed it to his satisfaction when a hand drew the chalk out of his fingers. Belinda, smiling and blushing, made a copy of his study; a very bulgy curious little heart hers was—evidently a heart with fatty degeneration, and it was pierced neatly in the middle by a very shaky arrow.

'There,' said the art student, looking up for a moment into the artist's face, '*that is mine!*'

And then dropping the chalk she ran back to her place at the barrow.

CURIOSITIES IN OUR CATHEDRALS.

MANY, if not most, of our cathedrals have curiosities treasured in them that are no part of the fabrics, but yet from associations have come to be identified with them, or with their history. In rarer instances, these curiosities are parts of the structure in which they occur, as in the case of the whispering galleries in Gloucester Cathedral and St. Paul's; and in others, without being actually a portion of the construction, they are parts of its ornamentation, as in the case of the figure of a demon looking over Lincoln from the roof of the south-east side of Lincoln Cathedral, and of the fiddler fiddling over York on the roof of York Minster. Sometimes a recent discovery imparts an interest as of a curiosity, as in the matter of the grooves lately noticed in the shafts of the Norman triforium in the south transept of Oxford Cathedral, whereby we may see the management with which the Norman masons used for their purpose portions of the Saxon windows they found, in the edifice they were improving, ready to their hands.

In Hereford Cathedral there are two relics of considerable extraneous interest. One is a map of the world more than five hundred years old; and the other is a chair of Norman workmanship. It is thought that the map was originally intended for an altar-piece, as it is embellished with a representation of the Last Judgment and other drawings of sacred subjects. It gradually became faded and browned, torn and neglected. Dingley, the seventeenth-century herald, mentions having seen it in the Lady Chapel. 'Among other curiosities in this library are a map of ye world, drawn on vellum by a monk, kept in a frame with two doors, with gilded and painted letters and figures,' he says. Before his time it was hidden under the wooden floor of a chantry chapel for a season, it is said, which circumstance may have saved it from destruction and given it a new interest when found. Nevertheless, it became so much dilapidated that it was eventually sent to the British Museum in 1855, that it might be cleaned and repaired with the requisite skill and judgment; and, since then, it has been placed in the south choir aisle of the cathedral, and protected with plate glass. It is drawn in black ink, with some of the initials and the names of places in vermilion and gold, and the rivers are coloured blue. The map is of a circular outline, and the framework on which it is displayed is rectangular, leaving

spandrels at each angle that are filled in with drawings and inscriptions. It covers about eighteen square feet. Here and there, all over it, are small outline drawings of fish, birds, animals, human figures, and buildings. Some of these are exceedingly curious, the most so being a representation of a man, apparently suffering from elephantiasis, with only one leg, which is of sufficient dimensions to be turned up over his head. Between two circular lines forming a border to the map are various inscriptions, and in the four corners are single letters, which, put together, read MORS. In the right-hand corner there is also a delineation of the author, attended by a page and followed by his greyhounds. His name is given in a short Norman-French legend: 'All who have or shall have read, or shall see this history, pray to Jesus in Deity (that) He may have mercy on Richard of Haldingham and Lafford, who has made and contrived it, that joy may be given to him in Heaven.' The map gives us the measure of the geographical information of the day. In the centre of it is Jerusalem, which is inscribed 'Civitas Ierusalem and Mons Calvarie,' and adorned with a representation of the Crucifixion. The ark is delineated with various creatures and three human figures. A mermaid also occupies a prominent place. Curiously, Africa is called Europe, and Europe is marked 'Affrica.' England is divided into Cornubia (Cornwall), Lindeseya (Lincolnshire), and Norhuba, and, owing to the scale, probably, but one hill is named in it—Clee Hill. Twenty rivers are marked and named, and twenty-six cities and towns, of which one between Winchester and Exeter, marked Cadan, has not been identified. Scotland has two divisions and six towns. Three towns are marked in Wales, and four in Ireland. Without going into details, it is sufficient to say that the work generally is of extreme interest and curiosity from many points of view, not the least being the fact that Richard of Haldingham has been identified as having held the prebendal stall of Norton in the cathedral from A.D. 1290 to A.D. 1310. The chair in this cathedral is of still greater antiquity. Word has been passed down through century after century that King Stephen sat in it on Whit Sunday, A.D. 1142. It consists of upwards of fifty pieces, and stands three feet nine inches high. It is thirty-three inches wide, and measures twenty-two inches from back to front. Four upright pieces, with knobs or finials, whereof two form the supports of the back, and two of a less height terminate at the arms in front, form a framework which is filled with rows of smaller rails arranged in an ornamental manner. Below the

seat, in front, is a row of semicircular arches resting on similar rails or shafts to those without this distinctive treatment at the sides. The seat is formed of plain boards placed in a groove; and the back has been also filled with an arrangement of moulded rails similar to that of the sides, some pieces of which, however, have been lost. It is not a little singular that Richard de Haldingham drew a chair of precisely the same construction as a seat for the Pope in one of the spandrils of his map, which has been accepted as evidence in favour of the probability that it was in the cathedral in his time. Before leaving this subject, it may be mentioned that the chair in which Queen Mary was married to King Philip of Spain is preserved in Winchester Cathedral; and that which was required, in addition to the coronation chair, for the coronation of William and Mary, is preserved in Westminster Abbey. As in the case of the coronation chair, a close scrutiny discloses the fact that colour and gilding once enriched the Hereford seat. As we leave this cathedral, and look down the glorious vista of massive cylindrical columns, a golden sunlight floods the building, and the verger points out a shadowy cross, cast by cross-lights, on the shaft of the central pillar of the Lady Chapel, which is surely a sciagraphical curiosity.

In Wells Cathedral is a curious old clock, brought there from Glastonbury at the Dissolution. It is not to be compared with the wonderful piece of mechanism in Strasburg Cathedral, either for size or intricacy or comprehensiveness, but is, nevertheless, quaint and complicated, in so far as it shows the solar motions, and the age and phases of the moon, as well as tells the time. It is claimed to be the oldest clock of the kind. The name of the maker is inscribed on it as Peter Lightfoot, a monk. The dial is divided into twenty-four parts, and is marked with old English figures up to twelve, from noon to midnight, and again from thence to noon. A little figure of a man strikes the quarters with his feet; and above the dial is a tower, from which four mounted figures emerge and tilt. On the dial are two inscriptions in connection with delineations of a female figure and a full moon inclosed within two circles, the first of which is '*Semper peragrat Phoebe*,' and the other '*Punctus ab hinc monstrat micro sidericus arcus*.' A lantern, that is always spoken of as the Glastonbury lantern, is also taken care of in this cathedral.

In Exeter Cathedral there is a fifteenth-century clock with the motto, '*Pereunt et imputantur*.'

In York Minster, among other curiosities, besides rings and

chalices found in the tombs of such of the bishops of olden times as have been opened in this and the last century, there is the minutely carved ivory tusk that was the token that Ulphus laid upon the altar in the eleventh century, as a memento that he gave certain lands lying to the east of York to the Minster, which lands are still in the possession of the dean and chapter. This horn is completely covered with carvings, in which winged quadrupeds occupy much of the field. There is, too, though it scarcely deserves to be mentioned in the same paragraph with this delightful relic, a curiosity preserved here that was found in the coffin of Archbishop Rotherham, who died of the plague A.D. 1500. This is a life-sized head of a man carved in wood.

As well as York and Hereford, Winchester and Chichester, Durham treasures several gold rings found in the tombs of mediæval bishops. Three examples, set with sapphires, were found in the stone coffins of Bishops Flambard, Geoffrey Rufus, and William de St. Barbara, when they were dug up, in 1874, out of the portion of the chapter house that was thrown into the Dean's garden, on its demolition to reduce its size, in the last century. The best known relics here, however, are the gold embroidered stole and maniple, and the pectoral cross, in which St. Cuthbert lay for so many centuries, which, with his comb and a few other items, are carefully kept in a glass case on a table in the library. In connection with these relics the curious statement may be mentioned that has been so generally received, that only three persons know where the body of this bishop has been deposited. When one of these three die, it is said, the secret is communicated to a third person, and so handed down. A few years ago an authorised exploration was made, at a convenient opportunity, to test the truth of another lingering impression to the effect that it would be found at a certain spot, which resulted only in proving that there was no foundation for it. The president of the Durham and Northumberland Architectural and Archæological Society mentioned to the members, in 1868, that a tradition pointed to a place under the third and fourth steps of the staircase leading up to the tower where the clock was, as the place of its concealment, and that this tradition had been handed down in three lines, one being in the Benedictine order, another in the Vicars-apostolic or bishops, and the third in certain lay families. As stated, when examined by the authority of the dean and chapter, it was ascertained that the place had never been disturbed since it was built in the days of the Normans. There is a carving of the dun cow

and of the woman who went in search of it, on the exterior of this cathedral, that must be accounted a curiosity also.

In Norwich Cathedral, in front of the ancient stone episcopal throne in the choir, is an indenture in the pavement to indicate where it was desirable the various clerics assisting in ceremonies should stand. In York Cathedral there were formerly circular stones laid down in the pavement for this purpose, which were taken up when the new tessellated floor was laid down; and in Westminster Abbey rows of small stones in the centres of the pavements of some of the ambulatories, called the middle tread, served to keep processions in good order. Some few of these last may still be seen.

Although a crypt is not a curiosity in a general way, the Saxon example under Ripon Cathedral may be viewed in the light of one; especially as there is a curious custom kept up of 'threading the needle' in it, which consists of scrambling through a hole in a wall that divides it from a passage on one side of it. It is small and dark, under the central tower, and is approached by a long dark narrow passage, forty-five feet long, to which access is gained by steps leading down from the nave. There are a few other Saxon remains that are curious, besides the Oxford windows mentioned, among which the remains of the Saxon church that was the predecessor of Peterborough Cathedral will come to mind.

In Bath Abbey Church the extraordinary number of mural tablets strike the eye with astonishment. Not only are the walls completely lined with these memorials placed in close rows and tiers, but the pillars are also made use of as places upon which tablets can be displayed. The reputation of the waters of this city does not depend upon any association with the abbey church, though in some of our cathedrals wells are found, as in the case of St. Peter's well in the ornamented recess in Archbishop La Zouche's chapel in York Minster. There is a well, too, close to the north-east angle of the choir of Lincoln Cathedral; and another near Wells Cathedral. In Beverley Minster there is a well in the interior of the fabric, as at York.

More curious than many of these curiosities is the collection of wooden figures, or effigies, of departed kings and queens preserved in the upper chamber of Abbot Islip's chapel in Westminster Abbey. These were used on the occasion of the respective funeral ceremonies attending their interment, when these effigies, in royal robes, represented the sovereigns and their queens to their sorrowing lieges. Among them are the figures of some other persons of

high rank. The robes of the earliest of these figures are no longer in existence, but, from other indications, one of them is thought likely to have represented Queen Philippa. In our own day we have added another similar funereal item to the national collection, in placing the car, on which the Duke of Wellington was carried to St. Paul's for burial, for conservation in that building. The earlier examples bring us very closely in touch with old times, and help us to see the reality of events that we are apt to consider but slightly as mere historical occurrences. In this light we have no more pathetic souvenirs than the sword and shield of Edward the Third still treasured in Westminster Abbey; and the gauntlets, helm, surcoat, shield, and the scabbard of the sword of the Black Prince still hanging over his tomb in Canterbury Cathedral. Placed there, inasmuch as their owners needed them no more, these simple personal relics bring before us, arrestingly, the loss, sorrow, wonderment, and gap felt by the nation on the occurrence of these supreme occasions.

Among curiosities that are parts of these noble fabrics must be counted, in addition to the whispering galleries, the instances in which history and tradition have invested certain objects with special claims, as in the matter of the martyrdom of Thomas à Becket in Canterbury Cathedral, and the window known as the Five Sisters of York. On the other hand there are a few items that are curiosities of construction only, as in the case of the so-called geometrical staircase leading to the library over the chapel containing the monument to Wellington in St. Paul's.

Most of the items we have mentioned, however, are small matters compared with the majesty of the structures in which they occur. When we have contemplated the height and queenly grace of the Salisbury needle, or have heard the white-robed choir singing, like a cloud of witnesses, on the top of the great Durham tower, or have ascended into the golden ball on the cupola of St. Paul's; or when we have looked upon the rival east windows of Gloucester, Carlisle, and York; or upon the massive columns of the many mighty naves with their arcades and shadowy mysterious-looking triforiums above them, and their lightsome clerestories above these again; or upon the superb vaultings, the inviting sculptured doorways, and other component parts of these vast works left us by our forefathers, they are dwarfed indeed. When we have seen the treasures in some of the libraries, also, they may seem of slight account. Nevertheless, they have an interest of their own that will be confessed by many minds.

THE OVERLAND EMIGRANT.

'FROM New Orleans to San Francisco, forty-two dollars and fifty cents. That include a sleeper? Why, yes. Oh no, this ain't no cattle train! it ain't no Pullman either. You've got blankets, ain't you? Well, all you've got to do is to buy a mattress from the agent; only cost a dollar and a quarter, and you can sell it again at San Francisco. First-rate travelling; plenty of light, a lavatory, and every convenience. There's a good stove provided in each car, and if you want hot water for coffee or anything, you've only got to make it. Everything first class and O.K.' So the voluble agent assured me, and lots more to the same effect.

It was just at the end of the Mardi Gras festivities in New Orleans, and as it had rained almost continuously for nearly a week the town hardly showed up to advantage. Very few towns can stand heavy rains as badly as New Orleans. Instead of flushing its drains and sweetening its streets at all, it has the effect of bringing forth all the obnoxious odours contained in its open gutters and trodden-in refuse of its streets. How absolutely hopeless and despondent Canal Street can look under such conditions! A general flavour of damp fusty fancy costumes scents the air; and the roads themselves, patched here and there with oyster-shells, impart anything but a delightful odour to the breeze. The open gutters, full of stale water and floating offal, add their tribute to the general stench. I was glad to get out of it, even as a second-class passenger on the Southern Pacific or Sunset Route.

The train was timed to start at 11 A.M. on a Saturday, and was due at San Francisco at 8 on the following Wednesday evening. I was assured that mine was a through car, no changing or worry of any kind, and that an agent of the company travelled on the car the entire distance to see to the comfort of the passengers. Of course he didn't; I'm afraid if he had his own comfort would have suffered considerably, for we had not been more than twenty-four hours aboard when we were looking round for a conveniently small representative of the company to kill. Unfortunately they were large coloured men of much brawn, who showed a disposition not to be killed.

When I got aboard the car I found lots to interest me. The car itself was not bad by any means. The seats were made of

painted slats, with no upholstery, and were hard but clean. I think the car had seven upper and seven lower berths on each side, but when we started from New Orleans we only had passengers for some twelve or fourteen of these, and we felt somewhat reassured; there would be elbow room anyhow.

We formed rather a curious crowd as we thronged round the vendor of mattresses. There was one long lad who seemed provided with unlimited lunch-baskets, and but for their presence looked more likely to be about to take a stroll down Broadway, New York, than an overland emigrant trip; black frock-coat, white silk tie, and silk hat. Next to him, apparently a chum of his, was a spotted youth in somewhat battered condition, and with the remains of a fine large 'jag' with him. He was more suggestive of the Bowery. Then came a family consisting of the consumptive remains of an unfortunate-looking man with a horrible cough which rattled the whole train, his wife a small white-faced woman with a high voice and prominent teeth, and three small children, all miserably pale, thin, and hungry looking. Then came the great American tramp, a large dirty man with frowsy tangled beard and bleared eyes, and clothes held together with bits of string; one boot conveniently cut to accommodate corns, and one large canvas slipper. His entire belongings consisted of a ragged brown-paper parcel, which I afterwards discovered contained his other boot, stale bits of bread, pie, and bits of broken meat. Then came two French gentlemen, rather inclined to *embonpoint*, suits of rather rakish cut, extremely dirty collars, and faultlessly waxed moustaches. They were provided with numerous bundles and bags.

On the seat next to mine was a crippled dwarf pedlar, who was travelling from New York to the Pacific coast. He was remarkably ugly, misshapen and miserably clad, and very dirty, but he was very bright and quite capable of taking care of himself and tray of collar-studs, links, &c. which he had with him, and which with his crutch formed his entire stock-in-trade. There were several others of whom I took no particular note, for they avoided everyone and lived in great retirement.

It was hardly the crowd I should have selected had I been making up a house party, and I did not appreciate the prospect of five days and four nights I was doomed to pass in their company. However, it was too late now, and I at once prepared myself for the worst.

The top-hatted youth, his bounding chum, the two French

noblemen, the family man, one or two others, and myself invested in mattresses, for which we paid a dollar and a quarter, much to the contempt of the tramp. The mattress itself was of curious build, a flattened square bag of straw, stiff, unwieldy, and lumpy, but somehow I managed to force mine into some sort of position, and I certainly found it soothing to sit on.

The agent, after selling all the mattresses he could and some few cooking tins, made us a lengthy speech, pointing out how much better off we were than the poor passengers in the Pullman sleeper; how much more airy, ventilated, and spacious was our car! How convenient it was for us having him there to point out all the beauties of the trip and smooth all difficulties, and attend personally to our individual comfort, while the poor wretches in the Pullman had only the services of a coloured porter! All this was very agreeable to know, for if anything did go wrong it was a comfort to know we had a small weak agent on the spot to jump on.

He then made the round of the car, giving 'pointers' and taking what he could get. I believe he made some three dollars, and then retired into his corner, ready to encounter any difficulties for us and see we didn't get done by anyone.

In the meantime we were making good time, passing through a dark-soiled country given up to vegetables and water. It did not take long for the passengers to get at their lunch-baskets. The top-hatted youth started in at once on corned beef, bread and butter, radishes, and claret. By this time, though, he had found it convenient to doff the topper and secrete it in one of his numerous baskets, take his coat, collar and tie and boots off. His friend rendered him every assistance in the demolishing line.

I had taken the precaution to bring a flask of old rye with me, which with cold sausages and bread and butter made a satisfactory lunch. My interesting cripple produced a loaf of black bread from the mysterious recesses of his bosom and nibbled that with satisfaction. The family started on pie from the first, and continued to eat pie, as far as I could discover, right through the trip without intermission. The tramp chewed tobacco. The French gentlemen produced remarkable cooking utensils and indulged in made dishes of a savoury nature which made the rest of the car sniff with envy.

The remainder of the day passed without any incident of interest occurring. The pimpled youth and his clean friend endeavoured to derive amusement and profit from cards, but no

one seemed anxious to chip in, and they soon gave it up as too dull for their *blasé* tastes.

That delightful person the train-boy (whose business it appears to be to throw books upon the laps of inoffensive passengers, and after leaving them with you long enough to become interesting appears suddenly and demands payment) did all he could to promote the sale of dates, cigars, chewing gum, and tobacco, with which he was provided, but not very successfully; and it was still early when most of the passengers composed themselves to sleep.

The night passed somehow, but most uncomfortably, and we presented a most disreputable appearance in the morning. I lay back on my mattress and watched the French gentlemen make their toilet. It was certainly a curious process. They completely dressed themselves but for their collars, and then proceeded to perform their ablutions. They produced a small towel and some kind of face-powder, and one of them fixing a looking-glass in a favourable position, the other proceeded to the lavatory and returned with one small corner of the towel nearly wet, and then with a good deal of puffing and blowing applied it to his face, making a succession of short dainty dabs, and then dried himself very carefully and gently. He then handed the towel to his *confrère*, who repeated the process, while the gentleman rubbed face-powder into his intelligent countenance. Their collars were next wiped with the much-tried 'corner,' and being made of celluloid, came through the process satisfactorily and better for the wash than the wearers. The plentiful application of wax to their moustaches completed their toilet, and they then turned their attention to preparing breakfast.

The cripple's toilet consisted in scratching himself very thoroughly and combing his luxuriant locks with one of the pocket-combs which formed part of his stock-in-trade. We stayed at some small *dépôt* for breakfast, and I took the opportunity to bolt a cup of very hot coffee and stow away a steak, but most of the emigrants made their own coffee and purchased odds and ends from hawkers who went through the train. During this second day we had our car generally full, with local travellers, mostly of the cattlemen and farmer class, some rather tough-looking customers, but mostly very jolly, noisy, but apparently well-meaning. Mexicans and a few Indians occasionally got a lift, but only seemed to travel short distances.

It was some time in the morning when that all-powerful person the conductor, on passing through the car examining the tickets,

insisted on clearing out the clean gentleman's lunch-baskets from under the seat and examining the space. Much interest was taken in his investigation, which was rewarded by his discovering a 'deadhead' or person stealing a ride. How long he had been there was not known, as the party himself, a sulky and unprepossessing rough, did not condescend to satisfy what he evidently considered impertinent curiosity; but he submitted quietly to be put off the train in the midst of a most unsettled country, with no roads or settlements for miles. We all looked out from the cars as the train steamed on its journey, to see him calmly sitting by the lines waiting—what for it was difficult to say.

Later on in the day this provided us with a good joke on the conductor. A large one-eyed cattleman had seated himself next to me, and as things seemed to be dull we built up a small joke to enliven us. We grouped all the baskets and bags we could collect and placed them carefully under our seat, and allowed the end of a large sombrero I had in my bag to slightly show itself, peeping out in a weak spot of the concealments, and then spreading out large newspapers, and arranging our legs in such a way as to suggest our desire to conceal some one under the seat. We had not long to wait until the conductor came through the car. He was proceeding leisurely down the aisle, when he observed us seated suspiciously embanked with books and papers. His suspicions were aroused, and dropping his keen eye to the floor under the seat observed the hat. He insisted on our rising and giving him room to inspect. We protested, we threatened, we appealed, all to no purpose; he persisted, and with much murmuring on our part, and the suppressed laughter of the passengers, reluctantly made way for his investigation. 'Now then, out you come!' shouts the official; 'no nonsense!' and he pulled out a hamper, then came a bundle of blankets, then a mattress, then—a hat! but that was all, and amidst the taunts and derisive cheers of the company the deluded conductor made his exit.

The day was Sunday, but there was nothing to indicate such to be the case in the general behaviour of the passengers. Cards were played a good deal, and there was much swearing and some drinking. We passed through San Antonio, Texas, at eleven in the morning, but did not stay long enough to get much of an idea of the town, in fact the car was now so crowded that it was not safe to leave one's seat if one wished to retain its use. A good many Mexicans were aboard now, mostly of a scowling, forbidding countenance, but very quiet and observant. Towards evening the car

got almost unbearable, so close was it, and as most were smoking, were very hot, and had their boots off, it was more than I could do to sleep, but I crowded myself into my corner and snoozed through the night with one eye open. The one-eyed cattleman next to me beguiled another of his class into poker, and played for five hours at a stretch and then came out square. How he did cheat! No doubt his adversary did likewise, but I fully expected a dispute to arise and a fight to ensue; but no, they seemed to expect cheating as part of the game, and nothing happened. By the morning we had got through the grassy plains we had been passing the previous day, and were getting into an uninviting desert of cold grey stone and cacti of eccentric formation, and by twelve o'clock we arrived at El Paso, 1,209 miles from New Orleans, being a little less than half the distance to San Francisco.

Much to our disgust we found that our car went no farther, and that we should have to change into an inferior smoking carriage unless we wished to pay extra and secure berths in a tourist sleeping car. That was the time when we made a very thorough search for our protecting agent; we wanted him badly. We felt that it would do us good to jump heavily on his neck with both feet; we felt that to execute a robust horn-pipe on his chest would somewhat relieve our feelings. But he was not to be found. Nobody quite knew how far he had accompanied us, but we all knew we had not seen him lately. It was of no avail, there was no one of convenient proportions to take it out of. There were numerous large coloured porters, but they did not encourage us. Some calmly paid the extra and secured berths in the tourist sleeper, but I waxed indignant and determined not to pay another cent, by which I inconvenienced myself greatly and mildly amused the company's servants. I had not even the consolation of threatening to write to the 'Times.' Of course our mattresses were of no use now, but instead of selling them back to the company, who generously offered us the magnificent sum of fifty cents apiece for them, we disembowelled them in our most fiendish style and scattered their miserable remains all over the depôt of El Paso. This relieved us some, and we resumed our journey under more unpleasant conditions than before. The tramp disappeared, but the dwarf was still there, gloriously drunk and giving all the trouble he could. He would perambulate the car looking for an adversary worthy of his crutch, and failing would fall back on—the floor, and become entangled in the passengers' bundles and would have to be sorted

out now and again. He would stick his ugly head out of the window at the *dépôt* and roundly abuse the loafers there. Great was his enjoyment when he maddened any of them sufficiently to come into the car with warlike intent, and finding nothing to kick would retire disappointed.

This night was the most uncomfortable of the whole series. There was not much smoking, but every seat was occupied, and a good deal of the foot space was taken up by the numerous bundles and baskets of the travellers. But it passed somehow, and we all welcomed morning, though it was the beginning of what promised to be a very hot day. We were in an apparently sterile district, mountains skirted the horizon, and nothing broke the monotony of the arid plains except the antics of an occasional coyote or prairie dog. It was very hot and dusty, and the glare prevented one's taking much observation of the landscape, though that in itself was monotonous in the extreme.

We thought we experienced the usual mirage which is almost part of the landscape on some days in this district of Arizona. In the distance was what appeared to be a large lake shining and glimmering in the hot sun. Several of the passengers insisted on its being water, and questioned the conductor, maintaining the absurdity of his explanation. The funny part of it was that when we got farther into the locality we discovered that it *was* rain, which had formed large puddles everywhere, and at one of the *dépôts* some of us got out and heroically paddled about in the mud to the satisfaction of the obstinate ones, who in this case proved to be right, and of course maintained that a mirage was a traveller's story.

We arrived at Yuma, a Government station, soon after ten on the Tuesday morning, and had sufficient time to get out from the stuffy car and look about us a bit. Yuma has the reputation of being the hottest place in the U.S.A., and it is reported that when members of the garrison depart this life, presumably for another tropical abode, their ghosts come shivering back for their blankets. There was a well-appointed *dépôt* there with excellent refreshment bars. The *dépôt* is situated by the Colorado River, and the collection of adobe buildings which, with the military station, form the town are scattered around on uneven ground. There was little to be seen but Apache Indians, the most villanous looking of all the tribes I had seen. They squatted on the platform and on the rocks around, glaring malignantly at the white people. They were commercial in their quiet way, and had bows and arrows and dolls for sale; they did not stoop to go round

peddling, but waited with stolid indifference for customers to come to them. Most of the ladies in the train were too horrified at their malevolent expression to personally trade with them, and commissioned the gentlemen escorts to buy curios for them, as they thought it safer and certainly cheaper.

We left Yuma, and crossing over the Colorado River were in the Golden State, and for the rest of the day perspired peacefully. The depôts we passed were very humble affairs, consisting only of a caretaker's house and a postbox, but they generally had small lawns of the most deliciously fresh-looking grass and a few shade trees of much beauty. This arid-looking soil answers kindly to cultivation and water, and, where water is more easily procurable, it is acknowledged to be most productive.

Towards evening the stations increased in number and importance, and the valley we were in seemed gradually to grow more fit for human habitation, the grass greener and trees more abundant. Towns of some ambition made their appearance; oranges began to be hawked at the various stopping-places. At night-fall we enjoyed a most lovely sunset, and were in a charming valley. Large roomy homesteads flanked the line, or appeared peeping through groves of oranges and lemons at the foot of hills. Prosperous villages with neat-looking stores and pleasant hotels were plentiful, and the hearts of the weary emigrants were full of thankfulness at the fair prospect.

Our numbers now began to dwindle, as many of the original starters left us. The consumptive and pie-eating family I saw disgorged from the tourist sleeper, and they formed an interesting group as I last saw them, the husband coughing inquiries of a large planter of ferocious exterior, and the wife and little ones seated on their trunks eating pie. The pimpled youth, who had managed to keep comfortably muddled since the start, sobered up sufficiently to recognise the fact that he had travelled some fifty miles farther than he intended, and also left us.

A lunatic Chinaman had been put aboard by another Celestial, who had appealed to the passengers to assist him, if possible, to get to San Francisco without mishap. The nearest passenger happened to be the inebriated dwarf, who readily undertook the responsibility, and who, in pursuance of his good intentions, promptly secured the Johnny's queue to the back of the seat: as the demented Chinaman made frequent efforts to rise and address the meeting in his native tongue, and as each effort ended disastrously by his being jerked back on to the business-end of a large

pin deftly placed in position by the able dwarf, such proceedings were received with much applause by the audience and whiled the time pleasantly away.

Orange culture was the one and only subject discussed, and it was suggestive of the conversation to be heard on the trains running through Kent during the hop season. It was midnight when we arrived at Los Angeles, and we were very glad to take the opportunity of the hour's wait we had there to stretch our legs a bit. I confined my walking to the platform and the luncheon bar, where I laid the foundation of an indigestion. When we resumed our journey at one o'clock in the morning the car was, if possible, more crowded than ever. It was just at the 'bad times' of Los Angeles, the result of the collapse of the boom there, and all who could were getting out of the town. How the night passed I hardly know. I remember dozing in a troubled uneasy way, and having visions of a mad Chinaman who shrieked speeches in his own lingo, of porters and conductors passing and repassing, of wayside stations and indigestion. When morning came we were travelling through a rocky country with a poor growth of pines. The line went over much trestle work of doubtful stability and giddy height, and made several loops, passing over itself in order to get to the high level necessary to pass the mountains.

It was just upon eight o'clock when we arrived at Oakland, the terminus of the line, and were transferred to the San Francisco ferryboat, a gorgeously appointed affair of upholstery and varnish.

This part of the trip was most enjoyable. Three miles of calm water, and San Francisco, looming up in the distance, enveloped in a blue fog with terraces of lights and huge blocks of illuminated windows! Really a mysterious and impressive view. The bay was dotted with steamers and sailing craft. Ferry boats were coming and going, having the gay effect of floating ball-rooms, so bright and thoroughly lighted were they.

At last we near the shore, and gradually the noise of a busy city makes itself heard. We land and make our way through ranks of shrieking hotel touts and hack drivers, and find ourselves in one of the finest streets in the world—Market Street, with electric lights and wonderful service of cable cars.

Thank heaven, we are at last at our journey's end; not another hour on board the odious car, and, rushing first thing to a barber's shop, we endeavour to drown the very remembrance of the trip in a most desirable bath.

FIVE VOICES FROM AN OLD MUSIC-BOOK.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick ; but hope fulfilled is a spring of never failing healing.

A FEW months passed in perfect quiet and almost utter despair. Joyce Aylmer was calm and quite submissive, but the cloud that had passed over her young life had apparently effaced every recollection from it.

‘Was there nothing to do her any good?’ the poor Squire asked in nervous irritability as, one after another, most of the famous doctors were sent for.

‘Nothing,’ and their searching look into the father’s restless eyes filled him with a keener reproach even than their cruel answer.

‘There is no madness,’ he would say quickly enough. ‘Nothing in my family to account for it.’ But a quick confused cough generally ended this assertion.

‘This is barely what we could pronounce madness,’ one doctor bolder than the others affirmed. ‘It is more a jar which the mind has received. It could never have been strong; and such cases sometimes result from strong passions, or drink in the progenitors, which leave their heirs with this peculiarly delicate constitution. Miss Aylmer will never be strong, and she will require constant care; but there is nothing, to my mind, to prevent her some day from returning out of this state of oblivion in which she is now living. I should advise a total change of scene and association.’

‘Good God!’ roared the Squire. ‘Do you mean to say, sir, you would shut her up?’ and his eyes shone a perfect fire on the astounded physician.

‘Most certainly not,’ the doctor answered; but his inward comment was, ‘I would you, this very minute, if I had the chance.’ However, he only went on, ‘I would take her away from Aylmer and all its surroundings. I would never speak about the place before her, and I would travel abroad somewhere for a year where she has never been before. Do not keep her too long in

the same place, but always be showing her fresh sights, and one day her mind, we must hope, may begin to receive and retain outward impressions. Never refer to the past; and above all be very gentle, not only to her, but before her.'

'I always have been one of the most considerate and gentle of fathers,' the old Squire began; but here Mrs. Aylmer came into the room, and her husband, with his head hanging in a very unusual manner, shuffled out of it.

He went round to the stables and patted his favourite hunter. 'Am I to leave you, my beauty? Am I to be driven from all I love?' and he leant his head for a moment on the beautiful creature's neck, who whinnied, and arched it, and did all she could to caress her old master.

'Hulloh! what's hup with you, making that fool's noise!' cried the stud groom; for, like master, like servant, every one at Aylmer seemed to use the same language.

'Why the —— was that bucket left by the door, you fool?' cried the Squire; a perfectly different being from the man who the minute before had been nearly crying over his mare. 'I knocked my shins against it this very instant. A more careless, lubberly set of louts, as you all are, I never saw in a gentleman's stables.'

Inside the hall a very different but a very animated discussion was taking place between Mrs. Aylmer and Miss Eliza. They also had heard the doctor's prescription, but they were both perfectly sure it would never be carried out.

'And if you did go,' Miss Eliza jerked out, forgetting to do her pearl stitches in the ribbing of her socks, 'and if you did go, pray what is to prevent your meeting other young men, and what is the use of her getting well if she is to fall in love with the next young man you are silly enough to encourage?'

'What is the use!' cried poor Mrs. Aylmer, exasperated beyond all endurance, and turning as only mothers and worms can turn; 'what is the use, Eliza, of living to the end of your life without one spark of love or sympathy or feeling? What is the use indeed——'

'Have you heard what Dalrymple advises?' the Squire asked, interrupting his wife, and fretfully appearing at that instant.

'Yes,' Mrs. Aylmer answered shortly, with a heightened colour and two unusually bright eyes. She had not said her say to Miss Eliza yet, and she had a whole pocketful of stones to fling at her adversary.

'Haven't you got anything to say, then?' the Squire asked quickly.

Latterly he had not been able to bully his wife as much as in former days; for with his daughter's weakness a new spring of strength had come to her mother, and there was a quiet firm look about her which stayed some of his temper.

'Say!' she echoed. 'I don't know what to say. Of course I would go to the end of the world with her, but we could not leave you. I don't know how we could go.'

'*Quite impossible. Utter impossibility,*' came from Miss Eliza's most knock-me-down voice.

Those four words settled the Squire.

He had been put out, first of all, by the implied reproach to his own temper in Doctor Dalrymple's speech; secondly, in the thought of leaving Aylmer and going abroad among a 'beastly set of foreigners;' and, thirdly, at spending a winter without any hunting. So, the first speech that could legitimately be contradicted was contradicted, and the law once passed according to the Aylmer Edict never could be revoked.

'Not go!' he said, turning upon his wife as a monster of selfishness and heartlessness. 'Not go, when your own daughter's happiness and health are at stake! I never heard such infamous conduct in my life! Any other mother would move heaven and earth to go if it would save her child!'

'So I would, God knows. And it is only Joyce who makes a heaven to me here,' the poor mother cried with quivering voice. 'But you would never go, Robert. You know how you hate the Continent. How can I leave you and take her?'

'Oh! Of course! Lay everything on me. It would not be you if you did not. Of course it is her wretched father who detains her, and he has been the cause of her illness, and of everything dreadful that does happen. He knows that well enough. Do you suppose, madam, I did not know what that idiot dared to insinuate? I had a hard matter not to kick the brute out of the house. Oh, no! You need not look so innocent. You know what I mean. But hark you. I will have no more of your lying tales when those fools come, and you may give your own instructions as you please to the household; but this day month I intend we all, with your maid and Joyce's, leave this house, and until that day year we shall not return. Do you hear?' he stamped. And then he left the room.

'Good gracious!' Miss Eliza cried, and for the second time in her life her knitting fell on her lap.

'Thank God!' poor Mrs. Aylmer cried, and the tears that had been driven to bay by her husband's angry words now fell down her face in a perfect stream of thankfulness.

'What for?' Miss Eliza asked, in her harsh tone. But Mrs. Aylmer took no notice of her; all the sharp speeches were forgiven, all the stones rolled out of her pocket, all the years of tyranny were forgotten. If God would only answer her prayer! What else had she to grieve about? Greater things have been done, she would say to herself, and the steady faith that surely God would hear her now kept her quiet, and gave her a certain peace she had never felt before. At first Miss Eliza made the most difficulty. She proposed staying on at Aylmer; but to this proposition the Squire firmly objected. The hall was to be shut up, and only the housekeeper left in charge. Then she thought of going to some watering-place and making a home for herself; but she was so damped in this plan by finding no one against it that she gave that up also, and finally, to the annoyance of Mrs. Aylmer, who had enough to harass her without Miss Eliza's company, she settled to travel with them.

'It would be so very dull for you without me,' she said, in a happy state of ignorance as to the price of her companionship.

Mrs. Aylmer, with her usual resignation, accepted this doubtful good fortune with the best grace she could. The Squire would neither propose nor think of any place. 'I am in your hands,' he would say, with a sullen moroseness. 'Go where you like. Do what you like. Amuse yourselves in the best way you can. I say nothing.'

Miss Eliza found fault with every town Mrs. Aylmer suggested. At last in their desperation poor Mrs. Aylmer mentioned Paris as the first stage in their journey, and in spite of the numerous difficulties that were thrown in her way, and the many reasons that were given that it was 'the worst place imaginable' for them to go to, she stood to her decision, and for Paris that very day month, as the Squire had commanded, they all departed. They stayed there a week. Each day it rained pitilessly, and the Squire hung disconsolately about the hotel. He would not put his foot out of doors.

'You did not mind weather at home,' Mrs. Aylmer meekly remarked.

'That is good honest Yorkshire rain—rain to make you see the crops grow, and to do the world good. Here, it is only this beastly, beggarly French rain, neither good for man nor beast; but you have brought me here, and here I must stop till you tell me to go.'

Miss Eliza, with a black bag on the table always beside her, with her knitting in it, and a little French dictionary, a clean pocket-handkerchief, and a bottle of lavender water which she was always scattering broadcast about the room, would sniff, and toss her head and say, 'A *great* mistake this coming to Paris. I always told you so, Dora. Besides, you never know who you may run against in a Paris hotel, and ten to one you will meet——'

'Are Aylmers afraid of meeting anyone?' growled the Squire, with an angry fire in his blue eyes.

'Of course I have done wrong,' cried the poor mother. 'Of course I am to blame; but if I don't suggest anything, who would?' Here Joyce came in. In an instant a transformation scene took place. The Squire lost his irritability, and with a sudden gentleness known only before to his favourite hunters, he looked at his daughter and placed a chair for her. She passed him by, and did not speak, but went straight to her mother, who dropped her nervous timidity, and with a quiet protecting possession told her to sit on the sofa by her side. Miss Eliza alone remained unmoved.

'Much good this coming here will do,' she muttered under her breath.

As the Squire would not get reconciled to Paris, Mrs. Aylmer at last proposed another move, and suggested that they should get down by degrees to the south of France.

'Don't move for my sake,' the Squire said. 'One place is as bad as another. They are all alike here. I don't care where you go.' But she kept to the moving with a steady persistency. Had not Doctor Dalrymple said, 'Take her to fresh places continually'? So, in spite of the Squire's remonstrances and Miss Eliza's great displeasure, she insisted upon taking Joyce to picture galleries, concerts, even to circuses; nothing was too great or too small in the mother's heart to effect the change she was praying for day and night.

'Was not a leper once cleansed?' she thought, shuddering, 'and was not his remedy but a little thing, so little that he at first almost refused to do it; and dare I refuse or call anything little that may heal my child?' The same spirit that prompted

the little maid hundreds of years ago, prompted Mrs. Aylmer now, and she resisted her husband's taunts, and steadily took her daughter to every amusement she could.

'You are making up for all your years of dullness at Aylmer,' the Squire would sneer. 'I wonder how you have contrived to stand them.'

And Miss Eliza 'would think it very strange how almost every Englishwoman threw aside her dignity as soon as she went abroad. There is something deteriorating in morals, manners, and everything in a country governed by the Pope. There always is,' she ended, with a very Protestant sniff.

It was very fortunate for Mrs. Aylmer that money formed no part of her anxieties, and that they could travel wherever they liked. From one part of the south of France to the other they moved, always restless, always seeking what they could not gain, and finding nothing but disappointments and troubles. In one of their numerous halting-places they found themselves at Perpignan, a little, sleepy, quaint town, looking as if it had been literally taken up and crammed in anyhow between the shelter of its gates. A slow, sluggish stream ran just in front of the hotel, and here the whole life of the place seemed to congregate in the form of some half-dozen women who were busy all day washing clothes. But the women, picturesque, as they could not fail to be, had not the usual brightness of the French women; they were too near the Spanish frontier for that.

'How long do you mean to stay in this hole, madam?' the Squire asked the morning after their arrival. 'You get from worse to worse.'

But Mrs. Aylmer did not heed his speech. She thought she had noticed a brighter look on her daughter's face, and certainly she had more colour now than she had a few weeks ago. She made some excuse to get her husband to take Joyce for a little walk, while she wanted to make inquiries about different purchases in the town. But this innocent dissembler had no purchases to make; she only went as far as the cathedral. Her first object in every place was to escape her husband and Miss Eliza, and to get to the nearest church she could find, and there her one great prayer was that her child might be healed. The Squire would have laughed at her. 'Churches were all very well in their way,' he thought, 'but Sunday was the proper day for them, and he could not understand a parcel of women bobbing and bowing

on weekdays as if they had not anything better to do, or as if they could not pray in their own rooms.' Miss Eliza had a lurking suspicion of Mrs. Aylmer's 'tendencies,' as she called them, and never failed to deal out her ideas of the 'knavery and trickishness of the Papal doings.'

Past a great arch and through the principal street till she turned down a side one the poor mother hurried, and then just in front of her stood the large cathedral. An open place led up to it. Arriving at the steps, she looked back to see if any of her party were about; then, with almost a guilty but a very relieved feeling, she opened the great door and went in. There was nothing remarkable in the church. About a dozen white-capped women had come in also, and were kneeling at the back of their high straw chairs. A dozen more griefs were being laid at the feet of One Who had promised relief to all who came to Him. A dozen more thanksgivings, promises, and intentions were being made. Mrs. Aylmer knelt, and made hers also. What would she not give to Him if only Joyce might be made whole? What gift would be too precious? What thanksgiving too great? As she knelt her weary years of thralldom faded away; one sorrow blotted them all out; one great longing, intense and almost fierce, filled her heart. Her look of anguish must have crept over her face; for a peasant woman, younger than the rest, paused as she passed Mrs. Aylmer's chair, and the look of kindred that a seen sorrow generally gives, flashed from her brown eyes. The look was reflected in Mrs. Aylmer's sad ones, and this stranger peasant stopped and said quite simply, as only a French woman could:

'Madame est seule, et Madame est étrangère, n'est-ce pas? Ah! Madame, vous ne savez pas quelle sympathie j'ai pour vous. Je voudrais bien vous aider. Ah! la pauvre Madame!' And she held out her brown working hands and stroked Mrs. Aylmer's thin, white diamond-ringed ones. Some steps came clattering along the stone floor, and Mrs. Aylmer nervously turned her head. What if her husband or Miss Eliza should find her kneeling in a foreign church, and a peasant woman like this talking to her? But only some more countrywomen entered, and poor Mrs. Aylmer turned again, and, looking into the kindly, honest face beside her, answered: 'Oui, je suis seule.' For was not her daughter taken from her? and had her husband ever been anything to her? And tears again filled her sad eyes.

'Mais, Madame! la pauvre Madame! elle n'est pas seule,'

answered the soft thrilling voice. 'Voilà, Madame! voilà!' And she pointed to the altar before which the lamp was swinging and burning. 'Il vous enseignera; Il vous aidera; Il est toujours avec nous—le bon Dieu.' What was there in this simple little speech that touched the suffering heart so? What fresh depth of faith did it reach? What new comfort did it bring? Surely even little speeches are the gift of God, and the smallest sayings sometimes have the greatest results. Mrs. Aylmer came away that morning happier, stronger in her faith; she no longer felt forsaken; One was with her in her hard fight, and she felt certain that one day, oh! one day, He *must* let her be the conqueror.

But a hard and fresh trial came for her on the morrow. 'Did you hear that noise last night?' Miss Eliza asked at breakfast. 'Such shouting and dragging of luggage, and such stormy voices! Then, actually—yes, actually—a man began whistling in the room above mine. I could hear him distinctly. He prevented my having any rest. Hotel life certainly is very uncomfortable.' And she looked daggers across the table at Mrs. Aylmer. Their English servant, who waited to see if they would require more toast, rolls, eggs, &c. (for the Squire insisted wherever he went on having his regular breakfast at his regular hour), was too well trained to make any remark; but later on, when Mrs. Aylmer and Joyce were going out and crossing the courtyard, their civil landlord, hat in hand, hurried out to meet them. He begged to be allowed to inquire if their rest had been broken; he was so grieved to think Madame might have been incommoded, but he could not have hindered it. It was the night train from Barcelona, and passengers going on to Paris often rest at Perpignan. 'There have not been many, though, this season. Spain is not so much the fashion. Some years it has been crowded; they come, they rush for beds, for café, for attendance, for everything! and then,' with a significant shrug, 'they make the tour of the town, and they are off that evening. That is the way, Madame. But then they are not English like Madame!' He ended with a profound bow.

'Who arrived last night?' Mrs. Aylmer asked, not the least caring to know, but for something to say, and unconsciously her eye rested on some portmanteaus waiting in the courtyard. H. C. in letters that were yellow from much travelling greeted her. G. H. and W. R. also stood a little way behind.

'I cannot say, Madame. Some gentlemen, young, I believe, and foreigners. I was not expecting arrivals, and I was at a neighbour's, and they have not yet descended; but see, Madame, they come.' Clattering down the broad stone stairs rushed three young men.

'I say, this is the queerest place we have stumbled on yet. Where shall we get some food? Not into that funereal room we were shown into last night, I hope. Look out, Henry! It is your turn this time. You go and tackle Monsieur the landlord, and do the thing well. No nonsense, mind. His best food and wine, or we cut it at once, and some horses out directly, for we are not going to stop in this hole all day, and the time of the Bordeaux train to-night. Now then! Go it, old boy! There he is bowing and scraping to the elderly lady in black.'

Mrs. Aylmer turned with a sudden dignity. Was this the way to talk about her? She had forgotten that Englishmen would scarcely expect to find English ladies in this little out-of-the-way town. 'I say, what are riding-horses? I get so awfully confused after those Spanish names,' answered a strangely familiar voice; but in a moment it was hushed, for Henry Cotterville caught sight of Mrs. Aylmer's face, proud, quiet, and very pale. Instinctively he raised his hat, but she took no notice of him; she drew herself up, taller and straighter than ever. 'Joyce, my darling, the sun is too hot; we will go back,' she said, and she took her daughter's hand. Her very dress brushed Henry Cotterville on the staircase as he still stood, hat in hand, too astonished to take it off, or make any other sign of recognition. She looked consciously at her daughter, dreading what effect this meeting might have; but Joyce looked into Henry's bewildered face with the utmost unconsciousness of ever having seen him before, and Mrs. Aylmer breathed freely again. As for Henry Cotterville, he stood dumbfounded. He had not heard of Joyce's illness, and her passing him by in that unmoved manner gave a greater shock to his vanity than he could have thought possible. If the faintest sign of recognition had been given him, his mother's lectures would have fallen to the ground, and he would have done his best to enter again the forbidden ground, and reinstate himself in the Aylmer favour. The future that was mapped out for him was not half so much to his taste as the future he had mapped out for himself. He had not been so petted or looked up to so since his visit to Aylmer; neither was the young lady he

had promised to propose to, after this Spanish tour, half as pretty as Joyce Aylmer.

But her property had always been a Naboth's vineyard to the Cottervilles, and as it joined the portion of the estate that was allotted to Henry as a younger son, Lady Cotterville deemed it essential they should be made one. Besides this question of division and arranging of land, Lady Cotterville had also very decided reasons of her own that her favourite son should not intermarry with the Aylmers.

'It is a deuced bore,' Henry said to himself; 'but she need not have cut me in that very decided manner.' And he put on his hat again, and twirled his moustache with a very offended air.

'Acquaintances of yours, Hal? or only the proper thing to do, etcetera, etcetera, when you meet sour-faced old women with pretty daughters, eh?' chaffed one of his friends.

'I don't know them from Adam,' rolled out in a great falsehood from his lips; but hearing a door open suddenly, and fearing the Squire should be the next to approach, he hurried to the landlord's private little sitting-room, and there, without asking any questions, he saw, safe enough, 'Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Aylmer, Miss Eliza Aylmer, *femme de chambre*, valet. England,' all written in the landlord's pointed writing. His next search was for an *indicateur*, and there he found a train for Bordeaux in two hours. Then he called his companions, and said if they meant to stay a day in such a hole he did not, and he should start that afternoon. They could stop if they wished, and join him at Bordeaux the next morning. And as for food, he could not touch anything in that awful salon—the very sight of it was enough, so he should go to his room and write some letters.

'Never knew you turn crusty before, Hal. Better get what fun you can out of the place.'

But Henry was firm, and as discretion forms the better part of valour, he discreetly shut himself into his room till it was time to go to the station.

In the meanwhile Mrs. Aylmer was in a fever; she was thankful, yet miserable, that Joyce had not recognised the author of all her trouble. Yet did it not show that she was even worse than any doctor had expected? Then the Squire happened to be in a more than usually restless state of mind that morning, and he was continually up and down, in and out, till Mrs. Aylmer was in an agony.

What if they should meet on the stairs as she had done? What if the Squire should hear his name? Bloodshed would be a certainty, and the most ghastly scenes went across her mind. A murder. Her husband taken up for manslaughter and hanged in a foreign land. She a witness. Joyce an invalid for life. Everything that was awful seemed to live and pass across her imagination that morning, and through it all came Miss Eliza's cut-and-dried, sharp annoying speeches. No wonder that Marie, the *femme de chambre*, looking at her in the afternoon, cried—

'Ah! Madame, qu'elle est souffrante!'

A rush of colour came into the ashen cheeks at this unexpected sympathy, and a longing to know how long this new terror must last broke the restraint that was almost killing her, and with a trembling voice she asked if those gentlemen were going to remain long?

'Ah! no, Madame! No one but Madame lingers here; it is no favourite place. They go immediately. See, Madame, there is the carriage for them. One departed at noon, and the other two go also.'

Mrs. Aylmer looked out of window. The portmanteaus were being strapped on to the carriage. H. C. was now being lifted up! But its master? Two men smoking cigars, and tossing up heads or tails with some franc pieces that were evidently soon to be tossed to the *cocher* by the way they were joking with him, were waiting ready to get in. Whom were they waiting for? Would they get off safely? Would the Squire just go out now and see them?

'Go! go!' the poor lady nearly screamed in her terror.

Presently the landlord came out with some red wine twinkling in three tumblers. They all clinked glasses, and then the two young men jumped into the carriage, and with a parting nod from them, and a low bow from the landlord, they drove off.

'But where is Mr.—where is the other?' Mrs. Aylmer asked.

'He is gone. He went at noon,' Marie repeated.

'Are you sure? Are you quite sure?' Mrs. Aylmer asked, with a painful doubting in her eyes.

'Certainly,' Marie answered. 'I saw him depart.'

'She is strange, very strange,' the girl thought; 'but then these English they are peculiar.'

The next stage in their tour Miss Eliza for the first time suggested, and unluckily her proposal was Bordeaux.

'Oh, no,' Mrs. Aylmer cried, 'Bordeaux would *never* do.'

'Pray, why not?' Miss Eliza asked sharply. 'In a town of that sort I should think we might get our clothes better washed, and there would be sure to be a Protestant church where we might worship. These chapels are very well for you, but for me it is painful to see people kneeling and praying before dolls.'

'Bordeaux is too English,' Mrs. Aylmer said, clinging to any reason she might fairly give; 'and you know Doctor Dalrymple said a total change.'

'What effect do you believe this change has done, or is likely to do?' Miss Eliza asked, unsnapping her black bag and bringing out a little travelling-map of France. 'There,' laying her finger decidedly on one spot, and her thumb on another. 'There! there is Bordeaux. Here is Perpignan. As we are here, what could be more direct?'

But Mrs. Aylmer, with a pertinacity Miss Eliza was astonished at, stuck to her decision.

'Bordeaux was out of the question.' Then, nearly taking away the Squire's and Miss Eliza's breath, this rash woman boldly proposed crossing the frontier and going a little into Spain.

'Into Spain!' the Squire cried, as if she had propounded a journey up to the planet Mars.

'Into Spain!' Miss Eliza echoed, electrified.

'Yes, into Spain,' Mrs. Aylmer answered calmly. She had thrown her bomb, and she was prepared for any battle that would ensue.

The Squire and Miss Eliza looked at one another; then, taking up her stocking, 'One, two, three,' she counted her stitches. 'I say nothing,' she said, but her sniff was ominous.

The Squire was left to do battle alone. 'Do you mean it, madam?' he began.

'Yes, I mean it,' she answered. Had not Henry Cotterville just left that country, and would she feel safe anywhere in France now?

'Then I think you are demented,' he shouted.

Miss Eliza cleared her throat in an affirmative manner.

But, demented or not, Mrs. Aylmer stuck to her point, and before the next week she had taken her party across the border. They stopped at Tarragona, at Tortosa, and at Barcelona. At last she lost heart too; she did not like to own it, but this Spanish travelling seemed quite a failure—perhaps it was only

the hotter weather, she tried to think; but she made up her mind they would return and get back into France, and perhaps try Italy, when some people in their hotel persuaded her to go as far as Valentia, it was considered such a healthy place. They almost held their hands up, to hear the Aylmers had not visited Seville, Cordova, or the Alhambra.

'What do I care for a parcel of humbugging Spanish buildings?' the Squire grumbled. 'We have places enough in Yorkshire to hold all their trumpery ruins in.'

Mrs. Aylmer coloured almost guiltily; she did not like her husband's ignorances being so very openly shown to anyone. Valentia should be their last visit in Spain; she felt she had made a mistake in coming, but this should be the end.

The weather was very hot; the sun shone down pitilessly. Miss Eliza's temper did not improve with the increased temperature, and a large green fan was added to her bag. One day she attempted to go for a walk, but a crowd of beggars surrounded her, and she had to take refuge in a shop.

'The woman behind the counter said "Anglice!" or some such word, and shut the door to protect me from them. I don't know how she knew I was English, for I did not say anything to her. I held my cloak round me, and held my umbrella tight, and waited about a quarter of an hour. It is not safe to walk in such places.'

'They would not hurt you, I think,' the Squire grinned, always open to anything in the shape of a contradiction.

'They had better not,' Miss Eliza answered. 'Still it is not proper for Englishwomen to be unprotected in such a land. The men all look like cutthroats, and the women are known to be the most immoral in the world.'

'You won't be mistaken for one of them. You need not fear,' the Squire chuckled. 'An uncommonly handsome lot they are, though.'

Miss Eliza resorted to her knitting in high dudgeon. Then, another of her grievances was, to see how utterly useless her good advice had become. Mrs. Aylmer at home was a totally different woman from Mrs. Aylmer abroad. There, weak-minded as she was, she had just sense enough to be guided; here, you might as well talk to the winds. She was out sight-seeing and dragging Joyce about all day long.

'You will repent it,' was her daily warning. 'It is most im-

prudent to be out in the eye of the meridian sun. You don't know what fever you may take, and if you die the officials will bury you that very evening.'

One day, after a more than usually severe warning, Mrs. Aylmer was returning through the Plaza de Martin with her daughter. A crowd was assembled there, and she stopped to see what was the cause of it. Flags were flying down the street, through which a carriage was slowly passing; soldiers walked in front and by the side of it. Wherever the carriage passed the people fell on their knees. Presently it came into the Plaza, and stopped before the great gateway of Santa Martin; the soldiers presented arms and knelt down, and a priest descended bearing the Host.

'He has been to one who is dying,' Mrs. Aylmer heard, and then the crowd dispersed.

What was it that made her look so anxiously at Joyce, and take her hand? What was it that made her notice her daughter's face was very pale? What gave her a sudden aching in her already sad heart? If Death were so near her in one street, what should hinder its coming nearer? Why *would* Miss Eliza's words come back to her? The sun was hotter than ever that day, and when Joyce returned she could eat no luncheon.

'You have walked her out in the eye of the meridian sun. You know how dangerous it is. I have told you so often,' Miss Eliza said, a little triumphantly.

'She is only tired; she wants rest,' Mrs. Aylmer said. Miss Eliza was the last person to whom she would confide the dreadful dread that had crept over her.

Joyce had no rest that night. She lay tossing and disturbed, not sleeping, yet not quite awake. She was feverish and hot, and her head was burning. Mrs. Aylmer had noticed an English doctor's name in the list of visitors that hung on the wall of the entrance-hall, and she said she should ask him to come and see Joyce.

'What! Fling away more money on those fellows!' the Squire grumbled. 'You are never satisfied.'

'You should not have walked her so continually,' Miss Eliza said, peppering an egg.

Mrs. Aylmer did not listen to these remarks, but she sent a little note by her maid to a certain Doctor Temple, in a room Number 83 in their hotel. Perhaps, though, he would not come;

perhaps he was retired, or even a clergyman. She sighed; but about five minutes afterwards a rap at the door reassured her, and a kind-faced, white-haired old man was bowing to her.

'You have sent me this note,' he said, still holding Mrs. Aylmer's little message. 'It is true I am a physician, and if I can be of any use to your invalid, or any comfort to you, I shall be very glad. I have been travelling for the health of my wife, so I understand anxieties,' he said with a kind smile.

'Really, really, this was a little too much,' the Squire thought. 'Not even allowed now to eat one's breakfast in peace.' Something, though, in the stranger's quiet, self-possessed manner stopped any grumbling.

'You are very kind,' Mrs. Aylmer said, getting up from her chair; 'perhaps I have been unnecessarily alarmed,' and here she instinctively looked at Miss Eliza, who had finished her egg and was giving the empty shell a decided tap with her spoon—'but she is our only child.'

'I perfectly understand,' the doctor replied. Perhaps he understood more even than his words intended, as he stood looking at the group before him.

'Come in and sit down,' the Squire said, Yorkshire hospitality overcoming his natural irritability. 'Can't offer you anything good, sir. Haven't seen a breakfast since we left home; but take what we have got.'

Mrs. Aylmer went to see if Joyce was ready to receive her new visitor. The doctor stayed in the sick-room for more than half an hour, and when he came out there was a gentle pity on his face that made Mrs. Aylmer snatch both his hands and cry, 'She is not ill! She is not ill! She is not going to die! Oh, Joyce! my Joyce!'

'No, no,' he answered reassuringly. 'I have not said that, and she has such a good mother that I shall look to your nursing more than to my medicines. She requires very very great care; but between us both, please God, we will restrain the fever. It is very well you sent for me as you did, for we were leaving this evening.'

'But you will not go?' the poor mother cried.

'No, I certainly shall not leave; you and I must nurse our patient together.'

He did not think it necessary to tell Mrs. Aylmer, but his first action was to send his own wife into another hotel, and then he

gave himself up entirely to the charge of Joyce and her mother. For nearly a week the girl lay quite delirious; now and then she was singing a few bits from some old songs, now and then talking to imaginary people; sometimes, but very seldom, she was speaking of Aylmer. Almost always each speech ended with the cry of 'Mother! mother!' Often she started up with her hands held out, and her face all alight, as it used to look in the old days, and she was evidently chafing again at some fresh injustice, or she was crying to her mother with that protecting sound in her voice, as if she were shielding her from some invisible Fury; now and again (and then the mother's heart sank within her), she was crying to her, as she had once heard her cry, and the sound then was full of entreaty, of despair, of anguish.

'You must never leave her; she knows you through it all,' the kind old doctor said.

Did he know what words of healing he was saying? Did he understand the sorrowing heart beside him? Souls and bodies are very nearly allied, and some doctors have the great gift of ministering to both. Once Mrs. Aylmer had partly told him the reason of their coming abroad; and then she had also said how Miss Eliza had disapproved her taking her daughter about so much.

'You did quite right,' he answered, and even if he thought it had been a little overdone he did not acknowledge it.

On the sixth morning he looked at Mrs. Aylmer's white face, and wondered if she could bear the strain of knowing that the crisis of Joyce's illness would arrive within the next twelve hours. No; she had enough to bear, he thought; so he went downstairs to the Squire and Miss Eliza and told them. 'It will not hurt them,' he said to himself.

The Squire said no word, but he turned his back upon the doctor, and the tears streamed down his face. Miss Eliza's knitting was on the table by her; but somehow it was not touched, and she was continually blowing her nose.

Joyce's sleep lasted ten hours; her mother sat by her side holding her hand—the doctor had prescribed it.

'She shall have her as long as she may.' He had three daughters at home in England, and his eyes filled with tears.

At the end of the ten hours a change came over the invalid, and a slight stir made Doctor Temple look anxious. Mrs. Aylmer, catching his look, read the reason why.

'Oh! my God, give her back!' she gasped.

Joyce's blue eyes opened, and with a perfect recognition she looked at her mother and smiled.

'She will do,' the doctor said, quietly pushing Mrs. Aylmer aside and taking her place. He dreaded the reaction to Mrs. Aylmer, and the least excitement before Joyce might yet be fatal for her.

But the mother's love was stronger than the mother, and in another minute Mrs. Aylmer was the nurse again. The doctor went to tell the news downstairs.

The Squire could not speak. 'God bless you, my dear sir, God bless you!' was all he said.

Miss Eliza instantly took her knitting in her hand, but she did not attempt to knit: the needles looked four times the size they generally did, and as for the silk, why it was all colours and quite confused! She laid it down with a jerk.

'Dora must not be allowed to take her out in the sun again,' she tried to say, and then her fan and pocket-handkerchief rolling out of her lap, she got up quickly and dabbed a kiss on the Squire's cheek.

'Law! bless my soul, Eliza!' he cried in astonishment, and then he began blowing his nose also very vigorously.

Strange whispers were creeping about in the little village round Aylmer; the cottagers tried to look wise and nod their heads, but none really knew the cause of the family's departure, nor of Miss Aylmer's mysterious illness. She had been so carefully guarded by her mother during that sad time that few had any idea of the nature of it.

Strange, too, was the sudden reappearance of the family among them again. Miss Eliza was the only one unchanged. 'She was too much of an Aylmer for that,' some of the country folk said approvingly. The whole ire of the place fell on Mrs. Aylmer for having left Aylmer without one of the name in it for a year.

'A curse will fall on the family,' said one old man, who dedicated his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren to the service of an Aylmer long before they could even speak. 'A curse will fall on the family, see if it don't. My eyes shall be closed before then, but fall it will,' and he rapped his stick prophetically.

'He ought not to have given us a wife from down south,' one neighbour of a more revolutionary turn of mind said. 'The Squire, he would never have left us, but she always was a weakly-looking thing. And now as for Miss Joyce, why, she never rides or hunts as she used, and she looks as altered—there—it's just all that travelling and leaving home, and that comes from a southerner being put at the head of us.'

Joyce did not ride or hunt, it is true, for her constitution had received such a shock, she never became really strong; but her mind was restored, and, very mercifully, the whole of her illness and its cause she never referred to again. That part of her life was completely a blank to her.

It was strange to see how she and her mother kept their changed places; Mrs. Aylmer grew to be afraid of no one, and Joyce still clung to her mother in any difficulty like a child.

But stranger still was the Squire's conduct. He, who once had been so passionate, and who could brook no opposition, was now so gentle, not only in his own home but everywhere, that no one ceased talking of it.

One Sunday, a little boy, forgetting the manners of the Aylmer tenants, pushed out of the west door before the Squire had passed.

His mother tried to pull him back, but the Squire, laying his hand on the child's head, said, 'No, no, let him come. Fine little man! Good little man! Whose boy is it?'

'Hodges', please, sir,' said the woman with a curtsy. Hodges had been gardener at the hall for twenty years, but none of his children had ever dared to look in at the gardens, and had run for their lives if they had seen the Squire anywhere about.

'Oh, Hodges', is he? Fond of apples, my boy? Must tell your father to give you some. Hope you are kind to him, Mrs. Hodges; can't be too kind to children, you know,' patting the boy's head again as he walked off.

'Well, I never!' said one woman. 'What has come to him? I remembers the time when he hated children; and how he did curse and swear at them, too, to be sure!'

'And if he did,' said Margaret Silverdale, the oldest woman in the village, coming down the churchyard path, 'is it you, Mary Fenton, to judge him? There ain't another family the whole country round to come near them, and "honour to whom honour is due," I say. She walked slowly down the path

leaning on her stick, and though her words were strong her heart was sad, for she could not bear to see the family, that once had been so bright and powerful, come down now to one heiress; and that heiress so frail and unlike an Aylmer.

All the five voices in this tale are hushed now. Henry Cotterville's was the first to be hushed. He married as his mother wished, but he did not live many years after his marriage. It was neither a happy nor an unhappy one. He bore his disappointment about Joyce very philosophically, and in talking of it to a friend one day said, 'It was really a peculiarly unpleasant business, for there was no doubt about it the poor girl was uncommonly fond of me, but it would have been too awkward, you know, to have had a wife liable to go mad.'

Mrs. Aylmer and her daughter outlived the Squire and Miss Eliza many years; and they lived so happily together that Death did not divide them, for Joyce died the same year her mother did.

Everyone's life forms a history: but the pages written in this world, whether long or short, are but the preface to the life which is Eternal. And to each preface the word *Finis* must sooner or later be written. The *Finis* to the old music-book before me is written to a plaintive little song called 'À Dieu.' And with these two simple words I leave Joyce Aylmer.

For Notice to Correspondents see overleaf.

BORD'S PIANOS

25 per cent. discount for cash, or 15s. per month (Second-hand
10s. 6d. per month) on the THREE YEARS' SYSTEM.

ILLUSTRATED LIST FREE.

**CHAS. STILES & CO., 40 & 42 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN,
PIANOS EXCHANGED. LONDON, W.C.**

**DR.
SCOTT'S
PILLS**

BILIOUS & LIVER COMPLAINTS.

**CURE
INDIGESTION,
FLATULENCY,
LASSITUDE, AND
WANT OF TONE.**

**In a Square Green Package.
SOLD EVERYWHERE.**

**DR.
SCOTT'S
PILLS**

**MILD BUT EFFECTUAL.
SAFEST FAMILY MEDICINE.
CONTAINS NO MERCURY.
A NEVER-FAILING REMEDY
ARE UNEQUALLED.**

**In a Square Green Package.
SOLD EVERYWHERE.**

IF YOU WANT—

APPLY TO—



Deposit a/c's opened.

Standing Orders received.

Lists on Application.

Any Information given.

EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE,

East Harding Street,

LONDON, E.C.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS



GOLD MEDAL, Health Exhibition, London: HIGHEST AWARD, Adelaide, 1887.

BENGER'S FOOD

For Infants, Children, and Invalids.

THE MOST DELICIOUS, NUTRITIVE, AND DIGESTIBLE.

EXTRACT FROM PRIVATE LETTER.—'Really I consider that, humanly speaking, "Benger's Food" entirely saved baby's life. I had tried four other well-known Foods, but in this horrible climate he could digest nothing until we began the "Benger." He is now rosy and fattening rapidly.'

RETAIL IN TINS, 1/6, 2/6, 5/-, & 10/-, of Chemists, &c., Everywhere. WHOLESALE OF ALL WHOLESALE HOUSES.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the care of Messrs. SMITH, ELDER, & Co., 15 Waterloo Place, S.W.

Every MS. should bear the Name and Address of the Sender.

All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. MSS. cannot be delivered on personal application, nor can they be forwarded through the post when only initials are given.

Contributions should be legibly written, and only on one side of each leaf.

LONDON: SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE.

PARIS: GALIGNANI & CO.

LEIPZIG: A. TWIETMEYER.

NEW YORK: WILLMER & ROGERS.

MELBOURNE: E. A. PETHERICK & CO.

SYDNEY: W. MADDOCK.

ADELAIDE: W. C. RIGBY.

TASMANIA: WALCH & SONS.



CLERICAL MEDICAL & GENERAL

LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED 1824.

Directors.

Chairman—Right Hon. Sir J. R. MOWBRAY, Bart. M.P. D.O.L.

Deputy-Chairmen { Sir WM. BOWMAN, Bart. LL.D. F.R.S.
Rev. JOHN EDWARD KEMPE, M.A.

LIONEL S. BEALE, M.B. F.R.S.

JOHN ASTLEY BLOXAM, Esq. F.R.C.S.

JOHN COLES, Esq.

WILFRED JOSEPH CRIPPS, Esq. C.B.

Hon. GEORGE N. CURZON, M.P.

Ven. ARCHDEACON FARRAR, D.D. F.R.S.

Professor Sir G. M. HUMPHRY, M.D. F.R.S.

Sir WM. JENNER, Bart. G.C.B. M.D. F.R.S.

The VISCOUNT MIDLETON.

Sir JAMES PAGET, Bt. D.C.L. LL.D. F.R.S.

GEORGE H. PINKARD, Esq.

RICHARD DOUGLAS POWELL, M.D.

WM. OVEREND PRIESTLEY, M.D. LL.D.

PETER WILLIAMS, Esq.

Assistant Actuary.

WILLIAM J. H. WHITTALL, Esq.

Actuary and Secretary.

BENJAMIN NEWBATT, Esq.

13th BONUS—January 1892.

Briefly epitomized, the results of the Bonus show

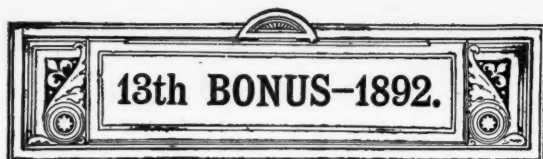
That the SOCIETY'S RESERVES

are the **STRONGEST**,

and That its BONUSES

are amongst the **LARGEST** known.

Chief Office :—15 ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.



CLERICAL, MEDICAL AND GENERAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

Chief Office: 15 ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.

☀ RESERVES. ☀

THE Valuation having been made by the most stringent Tables of Mortality in use (the H^M and H^{MG} Tables of the Institute of Actuaries), in combination with the very low rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest (a rate employed by two other offices only), and to the high reserves so brought out, viz.,
£2,533,078,

further sums amounting to **£90,000** having been added, the **total reserves**, relatively to the engagements they have to meet, were brought up to an amount in excess, it is believed, of those of any other office whatever.

☀ PROFITS. ☀

NOTWITHSTANDING these large and exemplary reserves, the condition of prosperity of the Society was such that the divisible surplus in respect of the 5 years was larger by **£53,450** than that of any previous quinquennium. The sum remaining for division among the assured, viz., **£352,500**, which was larger by **£40,000** than any previous one, provided a Cash Bonus averaging 35 per cent. on the premiums of the quinquennium, being the largest Cash Bonus ever declared by the Society.

Branch Offices:—MANSION HOUSE BUILDINGS, E.C.;

❧ INVALID LIVES. ❧

THE practice of granting Policies on "Invalid" lives—*i.e.*, lives below the average standard, either from personal defect or hereditary taint—was established by the CLERICAL, MEDICAL AND GENERAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY in 1824, and has been successfully continued to the present time. Much of this success is due to the fact that the Bonus System of the Society as applied to these Policies has been devised—and in this respect it stands almost alone—to ameliorate and, should the life be prolonged beyond the estimate, ultimately to nullify the original surcharge. By the aid of the subjoined table of Bonuses actually allotted at the present division this will be made clear.

**Specimens of Bonuses allotted to Policies of £1000.
January 1892.**

Duration of Policy.	HEALTHY LIFE.			INVALID LIFE. REAL AGE 40, BUT TREATED AS OF		
	Real Age } at Entry }	40 (Premium 82 : 10 : 0)		Assumed Age } at Entry }	50 (Premium 45 : 7 : 6)	
	Cash.	Life Reduction.	Reduced Premium.	Cash.	Life Reduction.	Reduced Premium.
5 years	56 0 0	3 11 8	28 18 4	78 0 0	6 9 2	38 18 4
10 "	56 0 0	4 0 10	24 17 6	79 10 0	7 15 0	31 3 4
15 "	56 0 0	4 12 6	20 5 0	79 10 0	9 9 2	21 14 2
20 "	57 0 0	5 11 8	14 13 4	80 10 0	12 0 10	9 13 4
25 "	57 0 0	6 15 10	7 17 6	82 0 0	16 4 2	Premium extinguished & Bonus added of £40 : 4 : 0.

A man of the real age of 40, for example, if charged the premium for age 50, would be allotted from time to time the larger Bonuses shown in the Table as given at age 50. These, it will be seen, are not only larger in themselves, but each £1 of Bonus produces a larger reduction of premium. On the assumption that like Bonuses will be given in future—about which, of course, no pledge can possibly be given—a man entering at the real age of 40, but charged the rate for age 50, will at the end of 10 years have to pay a smaller premium (*viz.* £31 : 3 : 4) than the healthy premium at 40 (*viz.* £32 : 10 : 0), and thus from that time be more than freed from the original surcharge. In 10 years more he will have to pay an absolutely less premium (*viz.* £9 : 13 : 4) than if he had been treated at the outset as a healthy life, when the reduced premium would have been £14 : 13 : 4. And, finally, at the end of 25 years, not only will his premium be extinguished, but a Bonus will attach to the Policy,—a condition he would not nearly have reached had he been treated as a healthy life at entry and charged the premium for his real age. The effect is even more striking when the reductions allotted to a man entering at other assumed ages (for example, 60) are compared with those granted to one entering at 50. (*See full Prospectus.*)

8 EXCHANGE STREET, MANCHESTER; 3 BENNETT'S HILL, BIRMINGHAM.

ASSURANCE AT PRIME COST.

One of the wants of the present day is a table of whole-life premiums, which, while making the least possible demand on the resources of the Assured, shall at the same time admit the Policies to full Bonus advantages. The annexed table of reduced premiums, which are believed to be lower than any hitherto published, has been framed to meet this want.

Being below the mathematical premiums for the several risks provided in the Society's full premiums, these reduced premiums may properly be said to supply "assurance at prime cost." They depend on the realization of a certain ratio of profit, and in the event of the profit at any division being insufficient, the sum assured by any particular policy will need to be charged with payment of such a sum as will make good its share of the deficiency, unless the Assured prefer to pay off the balance due to the Society. So large, and so consistent, however, have been the profits of this Society, that there is little likelihood of any such deficiency arising.

The new premiums, which are payable annually, are at all ages 75 per cent. only of the ordinary whole-life, with profit rates, the Society advancing the remaining 25 per cent. The 25 per cent. so provided by the Society, accumulated at 5 per cent. interest in advance, will be a charge on the current bonus. If death should occur within the quinquennial bonus period, the interim bonus will exactly meet the current charge, and allow of the sum assured being paid without deduction. If, on the other hand, the Policy should survive the quinquennial period and share in the declared bonus, it may be expected that the cash bonus allotted at each division will more than meet the current charge.

This surplus cash bonus may, on its declaration, either be at once received by the Assured, or, if he prefer it, be converted into an equivalent Reversionary Bonus, payable with the sum assured in the event, and in the event only, of death occurring subsequently to the attainment of an age to be stated in the Policy.

REDUCED ANNUAL PREMIUM

For £100 at death.

AGE NEXT BIRTH- DAY.	ANNUAL PREMIUM.
	£ s. d.
20	1 7 11
21	1 8 8
22	1 9 5
23	1 10 2
24	1 11 2
25	1 11 11
26	1 12 10
27	1 13 0
28	1 14 8
29	1 15 8
30	1 16 7
31	1 17 6
32	1 18 5
33	1 19 7
34	2 0 8
35	2 1 10
36	2 3 2
37	2 4 5
38	2 5 9
39	2 7 3
40	2 8 9
41	2 10 3
42	2 11 9
43	2 13 3
44	2 14 11
45	2 16 8
46	2 18 6
47	3 0 5
48	3 2 8
49	3 5 3
50	3 8 1
55	4 5 4
60	5 8 7

Further particulars as to the Prime Cost System will be furnished on application.

NEXT BONUS.—The next Division of Profits will take place in January, 1897. Profit Policies effected now or before the end of June will fully share.

The New Bonus Report, the Full Prospectus, Forms of Proposal and every information on application.

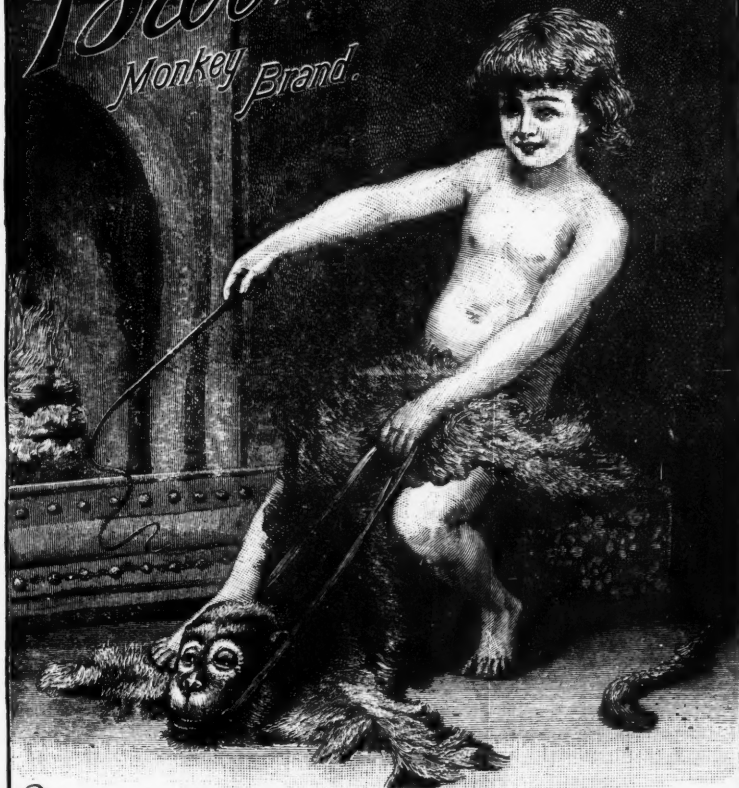
B. NEWBATT,

Actuary & Secretary.

15 ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, S.W., January 1892.

Brooke's Loop

Monkey Brand.



*Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross,
To see a young lady remove dirt and dross.
From cellar to attic wherever she goes
With Brooke's Monkey Brand which "Wont Wash Clothes!"*

FOR CLEANING ARTISTS' BRUSHES AND PALETTES.

**MAKES
COPPER
LIKE
GOLD.**

**MAKES
TIN
LIKE
SILVER.**

**MAKES
PAINT
LOOK
NEW.**

**MAKES
MARBLE
WHITE.**

**MAKES
BRASS
LIKE
MIRRORS.**

For Pots and Pans. For Knives and Forks. For Kitchen Tables. For Baths and Windows.

FOR GLASS GLOBES. FOR KNIFE HANDLES. FOR EVERYTHING.

Sparkling Glassware. Shining Pots and Pans. White Marble. Clean Hands.
Polished Stair Rods. Paint Like New. For Scrubbing Floors.

SOLD BY IRONMONGERS, GROCERS, AND CHEMISTS EVERYWHERE.

TRELOAR'S CHINESE AND JAPANESE MATTING



A COOL
AND
SANITARY
FLOOR
COVERING.



POST FREE
A
CATALOGUE
OF ALL
THE BEST
BRITISH
AND
FOREIGN
FLOOR
COVERINGS



TRELOAR'S
MATS

TRELOAR & SONS,
LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E. C.

